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ABSTRACT

Part of the Ethnic Heritage in America curriculum materials, this unit is about Greeks in the United States. The first section presents basic facts, such as a map of Greece, map of Eastern Europe, facts about Greece, historical chronological outline, list of Greeks in U.S. history, bibliography about Greeks, Greek publications in the United States, and a list of Greek organizations and information centers in the United States. The next section discusses Greek involvement in early settlement of North America at New Smyrna, Florida, and their traditions of baptism, the Christmas season, and wedding ceremonies. A third section presents information on the Greek migration to the United States and employment of Greeks, as well as their mosaic art, Karagiozi Theater, and folk music. The cultural patterns in Europe and USSR are discussed in the next section in light of some illustrious Greek Americans, some Greeks who contributed to American life, and the Greek historical consciousness. The Greek community organizations and independence day celebration are included in a section about conflicting interests within the United States. The last section focuses on the challenge of an interdependent world, especially emphasizing Greek concerns for human rights and religion. Each section is divided into two parts--one denotes the theme of contributions of Greeks to American life and/or their integration into American life and the second part refers to the relationship of Greek Americans to Greece and/or their retention of ethnicity in the United States. (ND)

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GREEKS IN AMERICA

Contributions to Ameria

Integration into American Life

Relationship to Homeland

Retention of Ethnicity in America

ETHNIC HERITAGE IN AMERICA

Project Director:

Daria Markus

SO009583

Curriculum Materials in Elementary School Social Studies
on Greeks, Jews, Lithuanians, and Ukrainians

Title IX Project of The Chicago Consortium for Inter-Ethnic Curriculum Development

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Part A denotes the theme of Contributions of Ethnic Groups to American Life and/or Integration of an Ethnic Group into American Life

Part B refers to the theme of Relationship of an Ethnic Group to Homeland and/or Retention of Ethnicity in America

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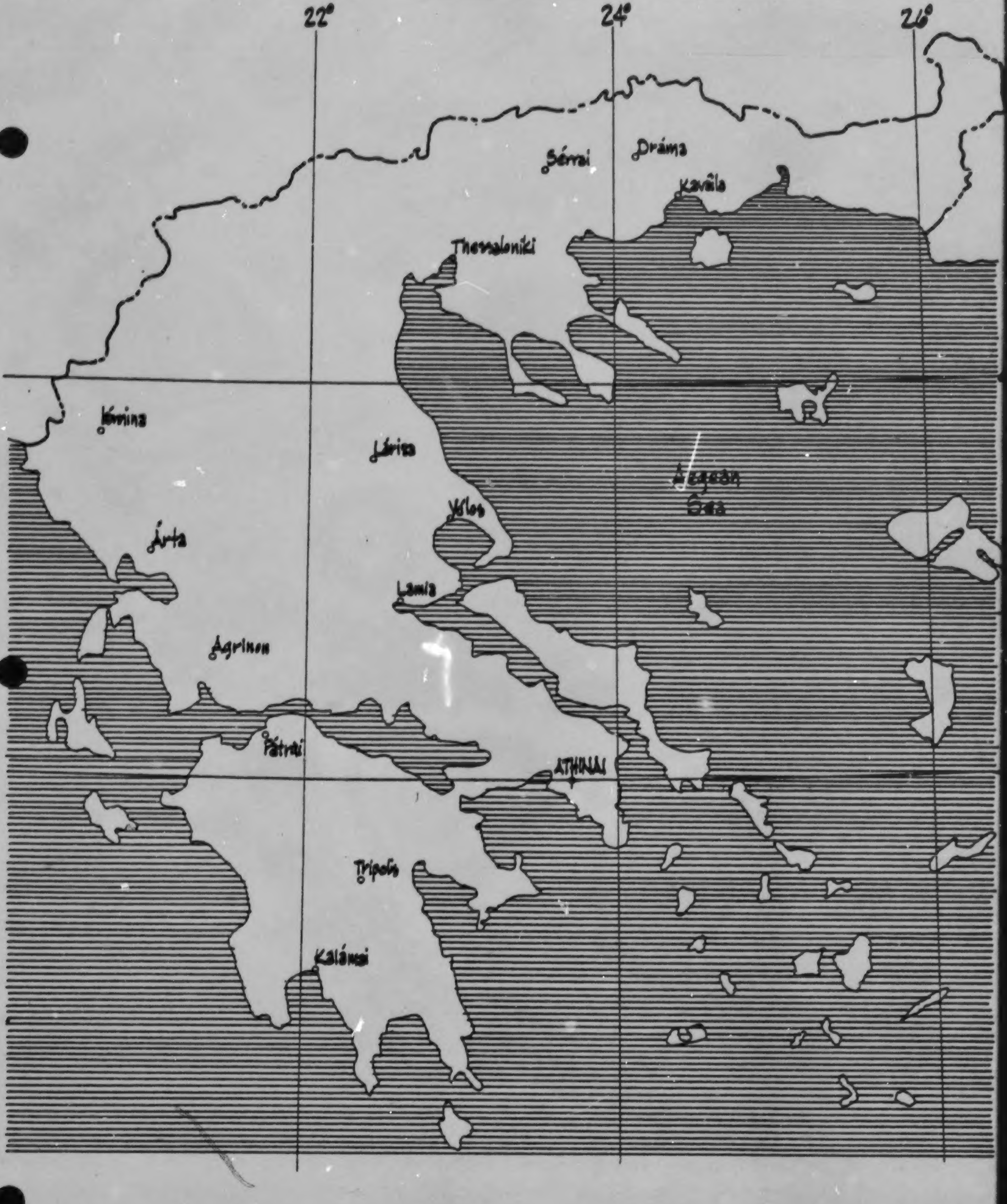
It denotes the main lessons which can be used comparatively with similar lessons for the other three ethnic groups.

BASIC FACTS ABOUT GREECE AND GREEKS IN AMERICA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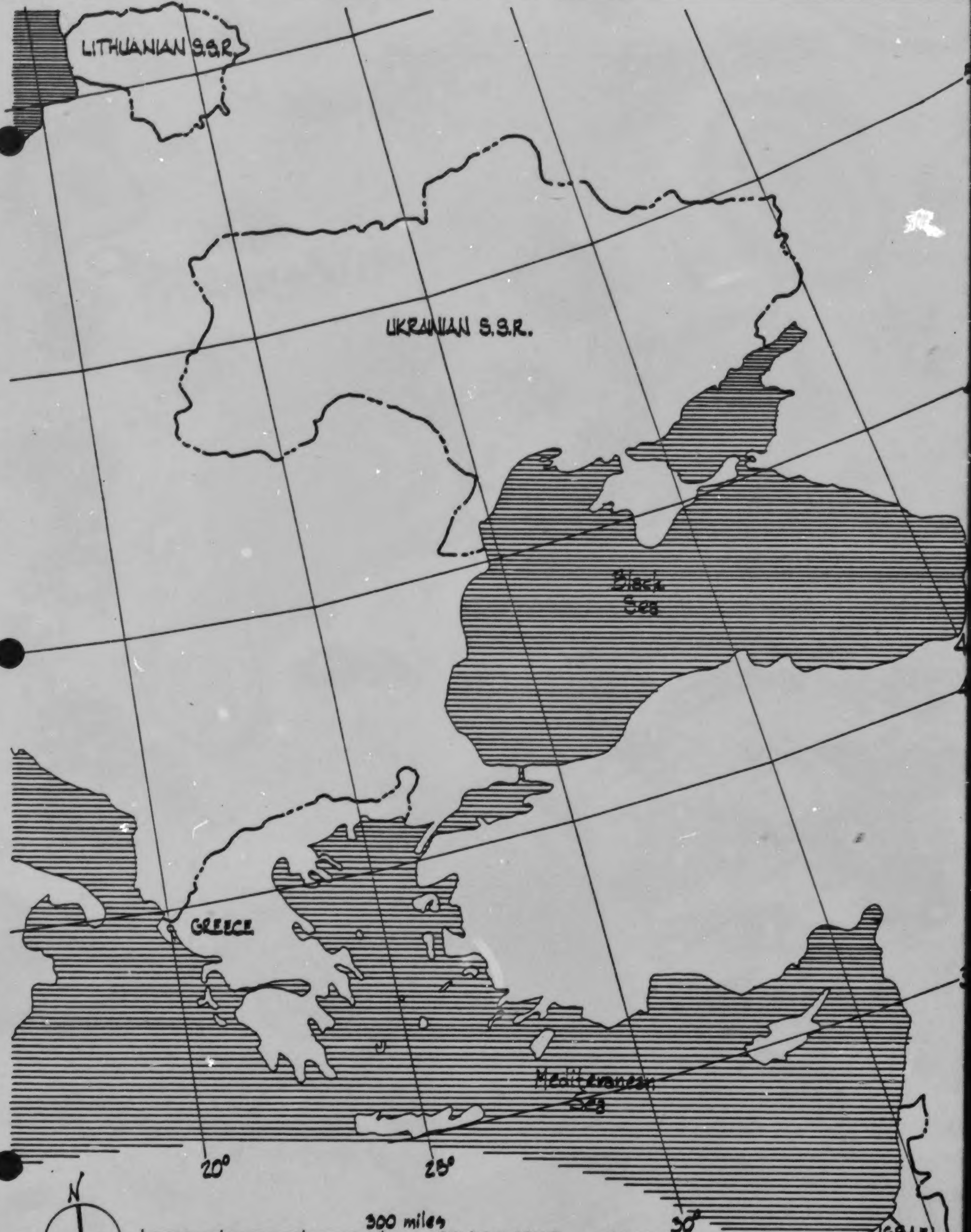
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BASIC FACTS ON GREECE

Area: 51 182 sq. mi. Coast line: 2,500 miles.

Neighboring countries: Albania Yugoslavia Bulgaria Turkey

Population: 8, 962 000

Capital city: Athens (pop. 1971 est., 867,000)

Other major cities: Sparta Patras, Megara, Argos, Kalamata

Language: Greek

Religion: Orthodox

Topography: Chief mountain ranges: Pindus Griva, Taygetos, Malevo.
Chief peaks: Olympos, Parnassus, Hymettus, Pentelicus.
Highest elevation: 9, 753 feet. Lowest elevation: sea.level.
Chief rivers: Achelous, Alpheus,
Chief Lakes: Karla, Volveis, Aginion. Chief Gulfs: Corinth, Aegina Salonica.

Climate: Winters are long and hard in the Greek mountains. The climate is milder on the plains near the sea. Summers are very hot. There is scarcely any rain, exept in winter. In summer, the air is clean and dry with rarely a cloud.

Economy and Resources: Greece has many minerals: lead, bauxite, silver, nickel chromite, white and colored marble, iron, copper tin. Agricultural exports have shown an upward trend during the past four years. Three quarters of the exports were in tobacco, raisins, cotton currents, canned fruits and vegetables, wines, fresh fruits, and hides.

Tourism: one of the main sources of income for many Greeks

Education: Greece has two major universities - the University of Athens and the University of Salonica.

HISTORICAL OUTLINE

Ancient roots -	for over 4,000 years the Greek (or Hellenic) people have lived on the southern portion of the Balkan Penninsula
500-330 B.C.	The Golden Age of Greece
330 B.C.-330 A.D. -	Hellenistic Age and Roman Imperial Rule
330-1453	Byzantine Rule. In the Byzantine (Greco-Roman) Empire with Constantinople made its capital. Byzantine Empire weakened by periodic attacks and invasions by Arabs and Turks and Crusaders' undermining influences, until the Fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453.
1453-1821	Ottoman Rule. Greece enslaved under the Turks. and part of the Ottoman Empire.
1924-1935	Greece as a republic
1935-1944	Monarchy
1944-1955	Great post-war political instability
1955-1963	Karamanlis government
1964-1967	King Constantine succeeds Paul I to the Greek throne
1967-1974	Papadopoulos regime

GREEKS IN THE UNITED STATES

1492-1870	Early Greek migration, periodic, and in small numbers important settlement in that period: New Smyrna in Florida.
1870-1924	More than half a million Greeks migrated to United States between 1890 and 1924.
1925	The quota system of the U.S. Immigration Acts between 1921 and 1924 which discriminated against many ethnic groups, including the Greeks, all but eliminated Greek immigration to the United States.
1864	First Greek Orthodox Church founded in New Orleans
1922	AHEPA (The American Hellenic Education Progressive Association) was formed in Atlanta, Georgia, in response to Ku Klux Klan demonstrations against the Greeks.
1923	GAPA (The Greek American Progressive Association) was formed by a group in Pittsburgh

In Chicago

There are now 18 Greek Orthodox churches to serve 150,000 Greeks.

The first Greek Orthodox church in Chicago was Agia Trios (Holy Trinity) built in 1897

The first permanent Greek parish day school was founded in 1908 and named Socrates School

By 1938 the Chicago Greek community was the largest in the U.S.

There are Greek television programs and daily Greek radio programs in addition to the Greek newspapers, the Greek Star and Greek Press.

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A complete overview of ancient Greek culture. Edith Hamilton and Robert Graves are among the contributors. Maps, timelines, and pictures are very pertinent.

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This monograph has been written by four historians, Dr. Kostas Argoe, Louis Sigalos Andrew T. Kopan and Peter Coorlas. It includes essays on the United States and Turkey, the United States and Greece, The American Press, and Cyprus. It was well received by the United Nations and has been used as a source for the United Nations.

Kazantzakis Nikos. Journey to the Morea. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1965.
This book is an account of the author's searching for the roots of his own art and being in the culture and life of modern Greece.

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Gives background and events leading to the revolution, names American and Greeks heroes who took part in it, and describes the role of Daniel Webster, James Monroes, Henry Clay, Dr. Samuel Howe, and others.

Saloutos Theodore. The Greeks in America. New York: Teachers College Press 1967.
Topics include: early years of Greek immigration, community life, activities between the two world wars, the World War II and its aftermath.

Jones. Jayne C. The Greeks in America. Minneapolis Minn.: Lerner PUblishing Co. 1969.
Aimed at students. The book traces Greek immigration from ancient times through twentieth century. It emphasizes the Greek achievement, the survival of the Hellenic culture,

Petrakis. Harry Marks. Waves of Night and Other Stories. New York: David McKay. 1969.
A collection of short stories about the Greek-American experience.

GREEK PUBLICATIONS

Greek Orthodox Observer
8 East 79th Street
New York, N.Y.

Embassy of Greece
Greek Press and Information Service
2211 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.
Washington D.C. 29997

1821 Greek War of Independence and America's
Contributions to the Greek Cause - Order of AHEPA
1422 K. Street. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

Pilgrimage Magazine
P.O. Box 364
Wheaton Ill. 606187

Greek Star Newspaper
4731 N. Western Avenue
Chicago Illinois 60625

Greek Press
509 N. LaSalle Street
Chicago Illinois

Modern Greek Studies Association
185 Nasay Street
Princeton, New Jersey 08540

GREEK ORGANIZATIONS AND INFORMATION CENTERS

Hellenic Council on Education
2701 Sheffield
Chicago Illinois

St. Demetrios Culture Center and Library
2727 W. Winona
Chicago Illinois

Hellenic Council of America
51 East 42nd Street Suite 612
New York, N.Y.

Hon. Nick Macrides
Consul General of Greece
168 N. Michigan Ave.
Chicago Illinois

National Bank of Greece
and Art Gallery
168 N. Michigan Ave.
Chicago Illinois

Mr. Andrew Athens
United Hellenic American Congress
129000 S. Metron Drive
Chicago Ill. 60633

EARLY SETTLERS

EARLY GREEK SETTLERS IN AMERICA

THE SMYRNA COLONY

Related topics:

New Smyrna
Labor: indentured servants

Ethnic group: Greeks

Theme: Contributions

TOPIC: EARLY GREEK SETTLEMENT

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. summarize the story of the New Smyrna settlement in Florida;
2. explain why New Smyrna did not succeed as a permanent colony;
3. suggest reasons why the Greeks preserved the name of their old community in the New World.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

The diversity of cultures within the United States has been evident since the early days of North American settlement. Sometimes the oft-recurring sounds of the English language and the legacy of English common law seemed to deny the multi-cultural realities of American life. Nevertheless, observers of the American scene, whether journalists or visiting noblemen, have noted the variety of peoples and cultures throughout America before as well as after the Revolution. Enough Germans lived in Pennsylvania by the 1750's to cause serious discussion in the legislature over the merits of German as an official language; Swedes on the Delaware and Dutch on the Hudson each made permanent contributions to "American" architecture; at the time of Washington's inaugural in 1789 Negroes comprised the second largest ethnic group in the nation.

The settlement of diverse peoples was not limited to the Atlantic seaboard. French trading posts dotted the interior from Michilimackinac to New Orleans; Spanish missions raised the cross and the arms of Aragon and Castile from Florida to Texas and California; fur-trading stations and fishing villages inhabited by Russians and Ukrainians stretched along the Alaskan coast southwards to San Francisco Bay. Throughout this vast territory the American Indian lived in diverse ways—some, like the Iroquois, the Cherokee and the Hopi in farming villages; others like the Cheyenne and the Sioux combined agriculture and hunting economies.

As time passed, the number and variety of cultures in the United States increased. Newcomers from central, northern, southern and eastern Europe became conspicuous. Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, Filipinos and other Asians crossed to the western shores. Still later came a great exodus from Mexico, Central America, and the islands of the Caribbean, Puerto Rico and Cuba.

In their old homeland most of these different people had little experience of the outsider. Almost everyone within the home village shared the same language, religion, traditions and values. Here, however, heterogeneity rather than homogeneity was the rule. In this new land diverse families and cultures flourished, sometimes in precarious harmony, sometimes in open conflict, yet all lived under the guarantees provided by a constitution which promised equal protection under the law. The presence of these different cultures helped to contribute to the rich variety of traditions and values present in American society today.

Bridge questions

1. At the time of the Declaration of Independence, what other ethnic

groups lived here besides the English?

2. What new groups arrived by the time your grandfather was born (1900-1920)?

3. What new group of people have come here in large numbers in your own lifetime (1962-1976)

NEW SMYRNA

The first sizeable settlement of Greeks in America took place in 1767 under rather unusual circumstances. Florida had become a British colony four years earlier. A Scottish doctor named Andrew Turnbull received permission from the governor of Florida to cultivate 2,000 acres of land near St. Augustine. He had no intention of farming so much land himself; rather, he viewed himself as an agent who would persuade others to come and settle. Where could he find people willing to take the risks and face the hardships involved in setting up a new colony? He thought of the people of his wife's home town.

Turnbull had married the daughter of a Greek general from Smyrna in Asia Minor. Turnbull himself knew of other areas near the Mediterranean Sea where potential colonists resided. He returned and collected destitute, desperate people from Greece, Italy, Corsica, and Majorca. He induced them to accompany him by painting a picture of Florida as a paradise, and promising to make them landowners. He brought over 1,400 men, women and children. He named the community New Smyrna in honor of his wife's home.

Under the terms of the contract with the English government, Turnbull was supposed to bring only Protestants. Greek Orthodox Christians qualified. He had agreed to supply them with passage, food, and clothing for three years, and return passage if they wanted to leave after six months trial. In addition, he agreed to give 50 acres of land to every family, with an additional 25 acres for each child.

The reality was very different than the dream. The voyage was terribly hard, and many colonists died at sea. Even worse conditions awaited them in Florida. Instead of the vineyard and olive orchards which Turnbull had led them to expect, they found themselves cultivating cotton on malaria-infested land. Many were harassed by Indians. Their work was directed by English overseers who did not know the Greek language. They were treated as slaves.

When Turnbull's promises were not kept, some colonists secretly escaped. The leaders of another group attempted to escape to Cuba, but they were captured and executed. In the meantime, the governor who had granted Turnbull his charter was replaced by another who did not favor Turnbull. When the unhappy colonists found a sympathetic government and legal help available in St. Augustine, they began a mass exodus. By 1777 New Smyrna was completely deserted. Turnbull and his wife had fled to South Carolina. Of the total of 1400 immigrants who were brought by Turnbull to Florida, only 600 remained alive.

Suggested activities

Ask the student to make a list of things they would take along if they were going to move to a foreign country. Tell them that they would be able, obviously, to get food and clothes in that country, but no American books, records, typical recipes, etc. Discuss their lists and the reasons for choosing certain objects. Ask them if they would prefer to give up everything that is familiar to them and to adopt totally the way of life in that country. Ask the students if they would want to go to live in another country, if they did not have to do it. Discuss their answers probing the reasons why they would or would not want to do it and under what circumstances they would leave their country. Point out that the early American colonists faced similar problems.

Evaluation

1. Where was the New Smyrna settlement located?
2. Why did the Greeks of New Smyrna rebel?
3. Name three other towns or cities in the United States whose names are the same as the original town or city in Europe. (In some cases the settlers may have added the prefix "New.")

CONTINUITIES IN ETHNIC IDENTITY

GREEK FEASTS AND CELEBRATIONS

Related topics:

Initiation rites
Symbolism in feasts and celebrations

Ethnic group: Greeks

Theme: Relationship to homeland

TOPIC: BAPTISM

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. describe the ceremony in which the young Greek child becomes a member of the Christian community;
2. name three important symbols used in the ceremony and describe their meaning;
3. compare the symbols which are part of the ceremony of baptism with other symbols used in other celebrations.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

When a person, a family or a group of people move from one place to another, they carry more things with them than are listed by the moving company or inspected by customs officials. Their race, language, and ethnicity are in most cases as obvious as their personal property. Perhaps less obvious and perhaps more significant, are their values, traditions, ceremonies, and celebrations. European immigrants to the southern hemisphere have carried the Christmas tree and the yuletide fire even though Christmas there occurs in the summer. Similarly, ethnic groups have brought to the free society of the United States traditions and ceremonies which have endured hundreds, even thousands of years of persecution in the old country. These traditions and ceremonies are continued in a different physical and political environment for varied reasons. They help to define the group as a people—to provide an answer to the questions: "Who are we?" "Who am I?" They provide some meaning in a generally chaotic world. They hold people together, providing security and a sense of belonging. They say: "This is where we have been. This is what we have done. This is what we value."

Bridge questions

1. Give one example of a holiday or tradition which has been brought to America by immigrants.
2. What obstacles do immigrants face when they attempt to transplant a holiday over a distance of thousands of miles and establish it in an alien land?
3. Choose one American holiday as an example. Describe how it is usually celebrated—the essential part and meaning of the holiday. How would you go about transplanting the essence?

Celebrating - Greek style

BAPTISM

Baptism for a Greek Orthodox Christian is the first essential sacrament of the Orthodox faith. The action symbolizes that the person belongs to God and is a member of the Christian community.

Baptism usually takes place when the child is over 40 days old. During the ceremony the priest faces the West, as he is holding the child, and asks the child to reject Satan. He then faces East and asks that Christ be accepted. The Nicene Creed is read, and the godfather of the child responds. The child and the godparents are led in a procession to the baptismal font. It is sometimes in the church proper, sometimes in a separate room or baptistry. The procession itself is a symbol of movement to everlasting life.

Baptism is considered by Greek Orthodox Christians as both illuminating and healing. Other symbols are lighted candles, and holy oil which has been blessed by a bishop. The water in the font represents all of creation.

The word baptism in Greek means "to immerse in water." As the child is dipped and brought out of the water, he is believed to be reborn. At the moment of the baptism, the child is given a Christian name. The Saint whose name is selected becomes the patron and guide of the child. As the child is annointed, prayers of love and joy are read. After the reading of the epistle: Romans 6:3-11 and Matthew 28:16-20, tonsuring is performed. The priest cuts the hair of the newborn in four places, making the sign of the cross on its head. This hair is the newborn's first offering to God.

The ceremony of baptism in the Greek Orthodox Church is identical in the United States and Greece. No changes have been made in the form of the celebration by Greek Americans. Although the practices or rituals have evolved over a period of 1,500 years, the essence of the rite is the same: a new member is welcomed into the community of believers.

Activities

Ask students to name any holiday that has originated in America and what these holidays celebrate or what is the meaning of these holidays (e.g. Lincoln's birthday, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving). If they were Americans living abroad, would they continue to celebrate these American holidays, even though the holidays have no meaning to other people in the country? For instance, would you as an American living in London, try to have a turkey dinner on Thanksgiving? Would it do any harm to the English people? What would it mean to you, as an American, to celebrate that feast in England? Would the meaning of the holiday be different if you had the celebration in a country where you did not hear your language spoken—for example, in Spain, Italy, or Greece?

Evaluation

1. Candles are traditionally used to indicate the age of the person having a birthday; what else do they represent or symbolize besides age? Give examples from different ethnic groups of the different uses of candles as symbols.
2. Compare the Greek Orthodox baptismal ceremony with the Jewish Bar Mitzvah. What are the common elements in these two initiating ceremonies: How do you explain or account for these similarities? What important differences exist between the two celebrations?

Related topics:

Festive customs

Ethnic group: Greeks

Theme: Relationship to homeland

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. describe the traditions which are part of the Greek Christmas season.

THE CHRISTMAS SEASON IN GREECE

We Americans often accuse each other of having forgotten the spirit of Christmas. And perhaps with reason. Rushing through crowded streets in the December slush, buying everything in sight for last-minute presents, and all the while worrying about our budget, may not be the best way to celebrate Christ's birthday. Ethnic communities in the United States show us other ways: they combine the best American Christmas customs with the old and colorful traditions of their own homelands.

For many centuries, Greeks celebrated the birth of Christ on January 7. The modern Greek church, however, has joined the Western world in celebrating it on December 25. The important day itself is preceded by a forty-day period of Lent and religious preparation.

One of the high points of this period is St. Nicholas Day, which now falls on December 6. It is on that day that parents give presents to their children. The reason St. Nicholas is connected with gift-giving is that he himself was an uncommonly generous person. He was an Archbishop in Asia Minor in the fourth century A.D. In his spare time, usually at night, he would disguise himself as a traveler and bring gifts to poor children, destitute families or girls who needed a dowry to get married. While we sometimes give gifts to please our own vanity, St. Nicholas did his best to leave his presents in the house of a poor family without being seen. Discovering all the lovely things in the morning, the children were convinced that God performed a miracle just for them. They thanked God, praised Him, and stayed happy throughout the Christmas season. St. Nicholas too felt happy and rewarded when he saw smiles of delight on the poor children's faces. That is probably why St. Nicholas is sometimes called the Wonder-Worker. In this country St. Nicholas has changed beyond recognition—he has become Santa Claus.

The Greek New Year is also the feast day of St. Basil. Like St. Nicholas, St. Basil was a Bishop in Asia Minor in the fourth century A.D. He was a theologian and writer. He composed some beautiful prayers and other liturgical texts. But, again like St. Nicholas, he is best known for having loved children: it is St. Basil who established the first orphanages in Greece. On St. Basil's Day, a special sweetbread, called vasilopita, is prepared both in the home and in the church. Sweets and pieces of dried fruit are added to the bread: they symbolize the joy of life everlasting. Also a coin is pressed into the dough. The person who finds the coin in his piece of vasilopita can expect good luck for the rest of the year. An elaborate ritual accompanies the distribution of vasilopita in church: special prayers are said and songs sung. There are some beautiful carols or kalanda about St. Basil; one of them relates how the saint came down from Heaven with a pen in his hand and love in his heart to teach the ignorant and aid the poor. You must pay a token sum for the piece of vasilopita you receive in church: the proceeds go to orphanages, to commemorate St. Basil's love of orphaned children.

Greeks celebrate namedays rather than birthdays. Since there are many boys and men named Nicholas or Basil, numerous family celebrations are held on those two holidays.

The Greeks celebrate Christmas Eve with a sumptuous evening meal. Although the dishes are varied and rich, traditionally they do not contain meat. A special attraction of the Christmas Eve dinner are the little round cakes, twisted somewhat like snakes or serpents. On Christmas Day after church Greek families and their guests enjoy more delicacies baked especially for the holiday. Kourabiedes are sweet buttery shortbread cookies and christopsomo is a bread with walnuts, sesame seeds and honey. It is topped by a large cross made of dough.

While the family and guests enjoy good food and the warmth of friendship, groups of boys go from house to house singing calenda or Christmas carols. After a few songs have been sung, the leader of the party wishes the head of the household a merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year in set poetic formulas. The family rewards the carolers with sweets and sometimes a few coins. Also the priest and deacon have begun to visit some houses of the village to bless them with Holy Water, which they will continue to do right through Epiphany.

The Christmas season does not end with Christmas itself. It extends until January 6, when the important holiday of Epiphany is celebrated. On Epiphany Day, also called the Day of Lights, the Greek Orthodox Church commemorates the baptism of Christ by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. Christians believe that during that event the Holy Spirit descended upon Christ in the body of a dove. On this day priests bless the worshippers in church with Holy Water, called in Greek agiasmos. Then they go from house to house, in order to bless the homes of the faithful with Holy Water. In each home they say prayers and sing special sacred songs. The priests also bless a nearby river or lake, In the course of that ceremony, they throw a cross into the river, and young men compete with each other by diving into the water to retrieve it. We must remember that winters are much warmer in Greece than they are in some parts of the United States.

VASILOPITA

A special sweetbread for St. Basil's Day

Related topics:

Arranged marriages

Ethnic group: Greeks

Theme: Relationship to homeland

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. describe Greek Wedding customs.

GREEK WEDDINGS

A unique treat that all Americans enjoy is an ethnic wedding. A Jewish, Polish, Ukrainian or Lithuanian wedding is a distinctive occasion, with its own color and charm. Those of us who have attended such an event for the first time, talk about it to our friends for weeks and months.

A Greek wedding is an exceptionally colorful and grand affair. It is based on many old traditional rituals. The first such ritual is the engagement ceremony which in Greek is called aravones. There is a reception in the bride's home; in its course, the priest sanctifies the engagement. In America, the couple probably met at a Greek social gathering. In Greek villages, on the other hand, the symbethera or matchmaker brings the two young people together, dealing not as much with them as with their families.

Before World War II, the younger brother had to provide the dowry for as many older sisters as he may have had. In fact, he was obliged to marry them off before he could get married himself. But this harsh custom has been discarded in our time.

The marriage ceremony, held in the church, symbolizes not only the union of two human beings but also the union of body and spirit in harmony and concord. After a short service, the priest blesses the wedding rings and puts them on the bride's and groom's right-hand ring fingers. The sponsor of the couple, who is usually their closest friend and in Greek is called koumbaro, takes the rings off and puts them on the ring fingers of the left hands.

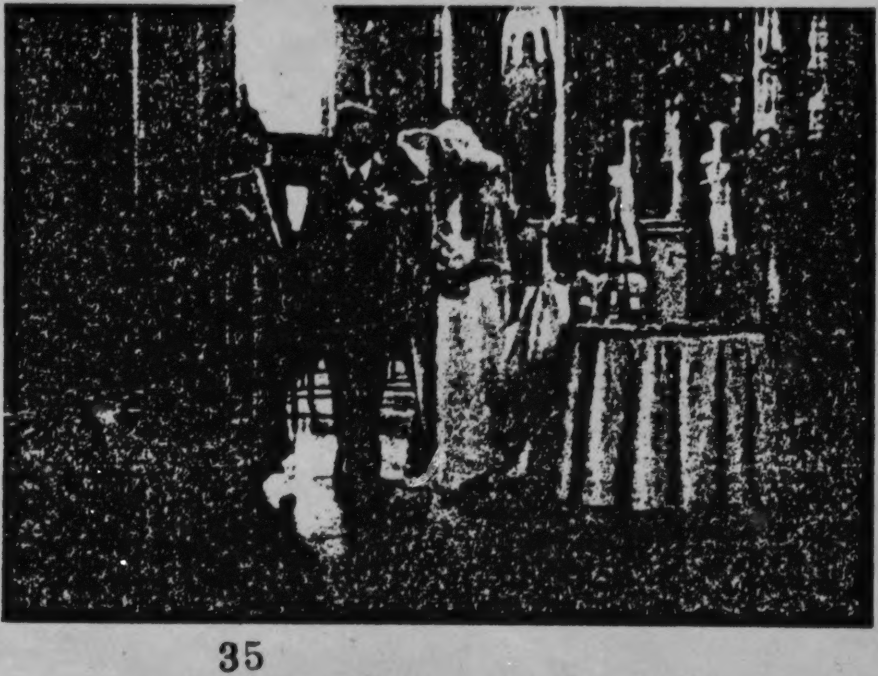
The priest then crowns the couple with stefana, or wreaths, whose long white ribbons are crossed. The stefana crown the young people's faith in God and in each other, and the intertwined ribbons symbolize the indivisibility of their two lives. The unity of the married couple is strengthened by the ritual of drinking wine from the same chalice. This ritual expresses the hope that the young people will always drink from the same cup of life.

The priest leads the couple in a circle around a little table in front of the altar, chanting the hymn of Isaiah. The words of the hymn refer to the groom as Abraham and bid him follow God's commandments. The church ceremony ends with a benediction, and the priest greets the married couple with the phrase Na zisete, or "May you have a long life."

Tradition dictates that the groom or his father pay for the wedding. In a Greek village this can run into quite a lot of money, since friends and relatives expect a sumptuous feast or paniyri, with abundant food, drink and festive dancing. Modern Greeks in Athens and other cities do not follow this tradition anymore: the bride or her parents usually hold a small reception for the closest friends and kin of the newlyweds. An obligatory custom at all Greek weddings is the giving of Koufeta or Jordan almonds wrapped in lace and attached to a small twig: each guest is given the Koufeta to take home as a favor or souvenir. If a young woman places them under her pillow at night, she will dream of the young man she is destined to marry. At a certain point in the course of the reception guests begin to tap their glasses with spoons: this is a demand for the bride and groom to kiss. After the meal, the bride and groom together with members of their families and the koumbara and koumbaro, who are the maid of honor and the best male friend of the couple, dance traditional Greek dances for the other wedding guests. The koumbaro and koumbara are the son and daughter of respected families in the community. They are expected to remain intimate friends of the couple for the rest of their lives, lending a helping hand in time of need. They usually become godparents of the couple's first child. After the opening dance, all the guests join in, and dance Greek folk dances late into the night.

It is good to have Greek friends. After all, they may someday invite you to a Greek wedding.

A Greek wedding



BUILDING A NEW NATION

GREEK MASS IMMIGRATION

INTEGRATION INTO AMERICAN LIFE

Related topics: Immigration laws

Ethnic group: Greeks

Theme: Contributions

TOPIC: GREEK MIGRATION

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. state approximately how many Greeks came to the U.S. between 1890-1924;
2. list the principal reasons for their migration.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

About forty million Europeans, Asians, Africans and Latin Americans have entered the United States in the past two hundred years. They came in different proportions and at different times. Before 1950 more than six million came from Germany, about three and a half million from Russia, less than half a million from China. The peak year of immigration from Ireland was in 1851; from Sweden, 1882; from Italy, 1907.* Among all groups (with the important exception of slaves brought from Africa) the reasons for coming have tended to be similar: The quest for greater religious freedom; the desire to avoid persecution because of their political beliefs; the search for highly paid work and an improvement in their material standard of living.

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*Source: Oscar Handlin, Immigration as a Factor in American History. New York. Prentice Hall, 1959, p. 16. The same statistics appear in U.S. Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the United States, 1789-1945.

The peak years of immigration for Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Greeks and Jews were in the period between 1880-1924. While large numbers also came to the United States following World War II and the subsequent civil war and political terrorism throughout eastern Europe, most of those in the U.S. today who are members of the above groups owe their origins to the migration of their grandparents and great-grandparents before World War I.

Most of those who came were peasants. They lived in an agricultural society which had changed little in a thousand years. They were not ignorant or stupid—terms suggested by our modern use of the word "peasant." They were illiterate; the government was not theirs nor was it interested in their material well-being. Generally, they were poor. Family "farms" were five to ten acres at best. They knew little of the world beyond the limits of their village. Into this isolated society came news about life in the United States.

The mines, factories and railroads of a newly industrialized nation cried out for additional laborers. The railroads had been given land by the government; now they needed to sell the land to settlers who would create new farms, harvest new crops and produce grain and livestock for the trains to carry. The railroads sent agents to Ireland, Sweden, Italy, and Poland seeking those willing to begin a new life in a distant land. Many listened; some decided to take the risk.

Men with strong backs and young families heard the same message in the coal and iron mines of Cornwall, Wales, Italy, Sweden and eastern Europe. They heard with disbelief stories about high wages in America. Workers in America were said to have meat every day, not just once a week.

Butter and milk and bread were cheap and good. Sometimes these tales were just that—"deceptive advertising" we would call it today. One worker from the copper mines of northern Italy in the late 1890's migrated to the copper mines of northern Michigan. In Italy he had worked a 48 hour week; in this new world he worked 12 hours a day, seven days a week—if he wanted to work. There were always newcomers getting off the next boat who were hungry to take his place.

Within the space of three generations the nation was transformed from a small, independent agricultural and commercial society into a powerful nation with a self assurance and pride that would have astonished the framers of the Declaration of Independence. The transformation had been made possible by the fearless labor of uncounted men, women and children. They worked in a society where the dignity of labor was sometimes the only reward.

Bridge questions

1. Most of the Jews, Greeks, Ukrainians, and Lithuanians who now live in the United States came here in what years?
2. What are the three major causes for migration to the United States?
3. What specific political rights and religious liberties does the Constitution provide for all individuals and groups in the United States, whether or not they are citizens of the country?

GREEK MIGRATION

Throughout the history of Greece there have been odysseys and new lands to explore. In ancient and modern times the reasons for migrating have varied. In the 19th and 20th centuries Greeks have come to the United States to seek adventure, to earn money, to obtain refuge from foreign rule, to avoid the draft, to escape political persecution.

The first large-scale Greek migration to the United States occurred between 1890 and 1924, with 1907 being the peak year when 36,580 Greeks came. At that time (1907) a major cause was the continuing war with Turkey. Heavy taxes and scarce funds in Greece were additional reasons. Poverty existed on a massive scale in Greece; many hoped that work in America would lead to an improvement in their living standards.

During the period 1890-1924 more than half a million Greeks arrived in the United States. Not all of these who came intended to remain. Between 1899-1914, the great majority of Greeks were men: ninety-three out of every one hundred were male. After World War I, the percentage changed and most of the new Greek immigrants were women. Nevertheless, about one-third of all Greeks who entered between 1890-1924 eventually returned to their homeland.

The second major period of Greek immigration occurred between 1925-1968. The Immigration Acts of 1921-1924 discriminated against many ethnic groups, and severely reduced Greek immigration. These laws, in addition to the Depression of the 1930's and World War II cut the number of Greeks entering the country to under 20,000. After 1945 special laws provided for increased quotas; close to 60,000 more entered. In 1968 a new law abolished the old quota system, but the number of Greek immigrants has remained low.

Greek Folk Costumes from different parts of Greece

Suggested activities

Have the students ask their parents their country of origin and why they or their ancestors emigrated to America. On a world map use colored pins to indicate the place of origin and the varied times of arrival.

For those who were here before 1840 Blue
between 1840 - 1870 Green
1870 - 1924 Yellow
1925 - 1945 Pink
1945 - 1955 Red
1955 - 1976 Brown

Use different shapes to indicate the different reasons for emigration:

A Star - for economic reasons
A Triangle - for religious persecutions
A Square - for political persecutions

Ask the members of the class to explain the reasons for their family's emigration to America. Gradually, the children may begin to trace patterns and see the correlations between the countries, periods of immigrations, and the historical causes for those migrations.

Evaluation

1. About one-third of the half-million Greeks who came to the U.S. between 1890-1914 eventually returned to their homeland for permanent residence. What does this fact suggest about the different reasons for migrating to the U.S.?
2. Explain how the immigration laws of 1921-1924 affected the scale of Greek migration.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR CAUSES FOR GREEK EMIGRATION

1. Economic. Due to natural disasters, as well as Turkish rule, internal and external strife, Greece was unable to develop a stable and balanced industrial economy for a long while. People were burdened with heavy taxes.

2. Political. At various times, either external enemies (Germans during World War II or Turkish invaders of Cyprus in 1974) or internal factions (Communists after World War II or generals in the late 1960's) have caused certain segments of the Greek population to migrate.

3. Religious. Conflicts with Turkey have displaced many Greeks living in Asia Minor, and Turkish occupied land. Greeks were expelled in 1922 from Asia Minor, and from Cyprus in 1974.

4. Demographic. Greece experienced a great natural increase in its population during the 19th century. By 1954, Greece had one of the highest population densities in the world - about 210 persons per square mile.

5. Social. The above conditions adversely affected the traditional Greek peasant society. It became difficult to maintain traditions (such as the dowry) and one's social and economic status in the village. Greek communities in the U.S. helped maintain certain Greek traditions and values, induced more Greeks to migrate, and changed the intentions of later Greek migrants from temporary to permanent.

Related topics:

Small businesses
Private enterprise

Ethnic group: Greeks

Theme: Contributions

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. describe the different kinds of occupations held by American Greeks.

EMPLOYMENT OF GREEKS IN AMERICA

In a single century, between 1820 and 1930, the United States received 38 million immigrants. Until the middle of the last century, most of the immigrants had come from Great Britain, Germany and the Scandinavian countries: in the 1880's they were joined by great numbers of people from Southern and Eastern Europe. In spite of the hard times, the immigrants found personal freedom and a degree of economic success in this country. In their turn, they helped the United States expand economically at an astonishing rate, and create the rich, colorful and diversified American culture as we know it today.

It was in the 1880's that the first great wave of Greek immigration reached the American shore. Although those people were primarily from rural areas, yet the majority avoided agricultural work in this country. There were several important reasons for this. To begin with, the newcomers did not have enough capital to purchase land and implements. Moreover, farming requires long-term investment of funds; developing the land and cultivating the crops takes quite some time. Often you have to work for a year or more before you are ready to take your products to the market. Work in an American city, on the other hand, tempted the immigrants with quick employment and regular wages. They also saw that life on an American farm is far more isolated than in the gregarious community of a Greek village. The new arrivals, lost in unfamiliar circumstances, wanted to be with their own compatriots who spoke the same language. And so, Greek communities began to crop up in many major American cities: New York City, Boston, San Francisco. But it is Chicago that has always been the center of Greek American life. Today Chicago has the third largest Greek population in the world.

The majority of the Greek immigrants found employment in semiskilled and unskilled manual work. And yet, although urban life appealed to them, they disliked regimentation. At the turn of the century, when railroad construction was very much a part of America's expansion, many Greeks joined railroad construction gangs. Soon they found that such organized work interfered with their personal freedom. And so, they began to go into business for themselves.

The beginnings were not very glamorous. Around 1910, for example, the Greeks had a monopoly on the lowly occupation of shoeshining. Later, their shoeshine nooks expanded into prosperous cleaning businesses, haberdasheries, or shoe repair shops. Peddling was another way to start in business: Greeks sold fruits, vegetables and ice cream from door to door. Later they left the streets and established fruit, vegetable and confectionary shops. By 1937 Greeks owned two thousand such shops in Chicago alone.

It was out of these vegetable and candy stores that the business for which Greeks in this country are known today developed. We mean the restaurant industry. Before opening his own restaurant, a Greek went through the whole hierarchy of the business: dishwasher, busboy, waiter, cook, captain. As a result, the Greek restaurant owner could, at a moment's notice, take over any job in his place of business and do it well. This gave the Greek restauranteur the opportunity to know his business inside out. Here is probably one of the main reasons of Greeks' great successes in the restaurant industry.

When the business grew large enough to require hired help, the owner brought young men from Greece through the so-called "Patron's System." The "patron" hired the workers in Greece and brought them to the United States at his own expense. Here he was responsible for them, teaching them the language and the trade, until they were ready to go out on their own. They often ate and slept at his house. Thus the Greek community itself took care of the young immigrant until he became a functioning member of the larger American society. It is easy to see that the "patron's system," worked in favor of both the patron and the new arrival: it provided inexpensive labor, while at the same time preventing a sense of confusion, anxiety and sometimes heartbreak and tragedy that occasionally met a newcomer in this country.

There are many reasons that the Greek immigrant became interested in the restaurant business. It gave him the opportunity to be his own boss, thus satisfying his need for personal freedom. The restaurant gave him emotional security: he could communicate with his compatriots and retain his Greek identity, while at the same time slowly learning the American customs and mores and mastering the English language. The restaurant was generally a family enterprise and helped maintain family unity. The Greek, by nature tolerant of other nations and races, did not want conflict: catering to the public at all levels and walks of life was easy for him and he was successful at it. Also, he had the opportunity to introduce Americans to the delicious dishes of his country and thus acquaint them with his own culture. No formal education or political influence was needed to open a restaurant. Labor was cheap. If you were willing to put in long hours of hard work, good money could be made in the restaurant business.

Greek immigrants followed other occupations as well, although to a much lesser degree. There were Greek furriers, barbers, grocers, tavern owners. But even they, at one time or another, either had owned restaurants or had been connected with the restaurant industry.

Greek immigrants worked hard to give their children a college education. And so, among second-generation Greeks we already find physicians, lawyers, teachers, business executives. Some, like Elia Kazan or Telly Savalas, have become internationally famous. Not many young people want to stay in their fathers' restaurants: today new Greek restaurants are opened by recent arrivals from Greece, so that their children in turn may become professionals, intellectuals or artists.

On the whole, Greeks in America are pleased with their destiny.

Taverna - a Greek restaurant

EXPRESSIONS OF ETHNICITY: GREEK FOLK CULTURE

Related topics:

Icons
Symbolism

Ethnic group: Greeks

Theme: Relationship to homeland

TOPIC: MOSAIC ART

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. define the term, "mosaic";
2. list three ways different groups have used mosaics for art and decoration.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

A people carry with them into a new country needs and wants which escape the careful eye of immigration officials. These longings and aspirations are not economic. They do not represent a massive "I want" chorus. Rather, there seems to exist within society a need for community, for purpose and meaning, for beauty and order. These collective needs are frequently expressed and satisfied by the work of individual artists—poets, painters, musicians. The artist may not consciously ask, "Ah, now today what shall I create on behalf of my people?" But the work that the artist creates represents not only the way he or she sees reality, but also the way their people view the world. If it were otherwise, the artist and the people would not be able to communicate with each other, and one would not be able to act as spokesman for the larger group.

In the early days of human society folk art was a direct representation of these collective needs and fears. The cave drawings at Lascaux, France, for example, painted about 15-20,000 years ago, are believed to be the work of a group of artist-priests acting on behalf of the common good. The "art" is an expression of the people's desire to propitiate forces they did not understand and to seek their aid in obtaining food. Other examples of folk art—dance, song, theatre, weaving, embroidery, sculpture—originally served similar social purposes—to express joy or thanks, to share grief, to record an important event.

As time passed these distinctive, unique acts became ritualized. The memory of the original, religious event receded, but often the words and actions associated with the original event were continued. The rituals endured because they combined grace and mystery, they were beautiful to watch or pleasing to hear. They were emotionally and aesthetically satisfying to the members of the group.

In the United States today these old folk expressions have taken on a new meaning. The original event which they celebrate and the reasons for the ritual performance may have been forgotten, but the tradition itself is regarded as a vital symbol of the group's identity. Commercial entertainment and the work of professional artists may both be more sophisticated. Television and mass education have broken down many of the old barriers between groups. All the more reason then to retain the old way of doing things as guideposts to help us know who we are.

MOSAIC ART

Mosaics are designs or pictures formed by the careful arrangement of small cubes of glass, stone, marble, or other material. They were first used about 2800 B.C. in Mesopotamia where the people decorated their brick buildings with precious gems and pearl. In ancient Egypt columns were covered with tile and precious stones. In the third century B.C. the Greeks thought of putting mosaics on floors. Beautiful mosaic floors were found in abundance when the Roman resort city of Pompeii was excavated.

The Byzantine Empire, from the second to fifth centuries A.D., did splendid things with mosaic. Vitreous glass, called smalti, was made in hundreds of colors. These little cubes were set in a background of gold. Previously, the Greeks and Romans used only cream and white background. The Byzantine Emperor, Constantine, built many churches and decorated the interior walls and vaulted ceilings with mosaics. The cubes of colored glass had been put into the wet mortar, so that the sun from the windows would hit each small part of the mosaic from various angles, and make it glow. Mosaics of Biblical characters were put on church walls, and geometric patterns were used on the floor. Later mosaics were used without symbolic content.

Some common Christian symbols used in mosaic are:

the fish - a symbol of Christ. Greek Christians often spoke of Jesus Christ as Isous Christos, Theos, Sotir—"Jesus Christ, God our Savior." In the Greek language the first letters of each word in this title— IXOYΣ —also spell the Greek word for "fish"—hence, the use of the fish as symbol for Christ.

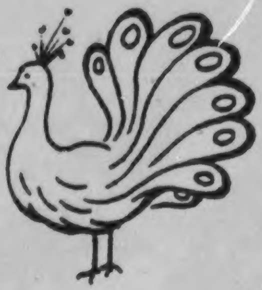
the peacock - an early symbol of Christ's resurrection. When the peacock sheds his feathers, he grows more brilliant ones than those he lost.

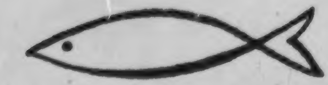
alpha and omega - the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. They are symbols for God, first and last, the beginning and the end of all.

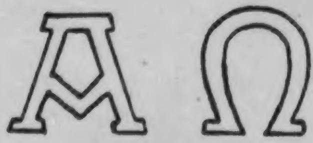
the circle and the triangle - symbols of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

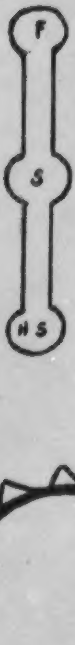
sun - symbolizes that God is the giver of light.

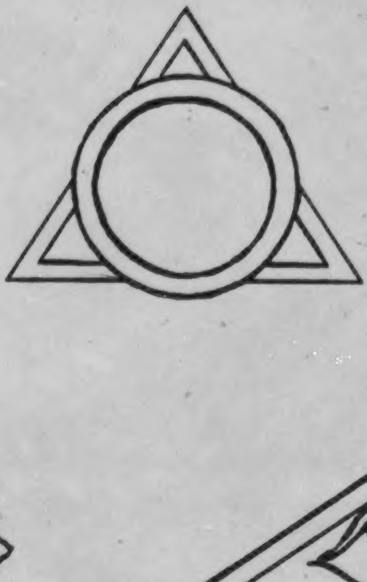
eye - symbolizes that God sees all.

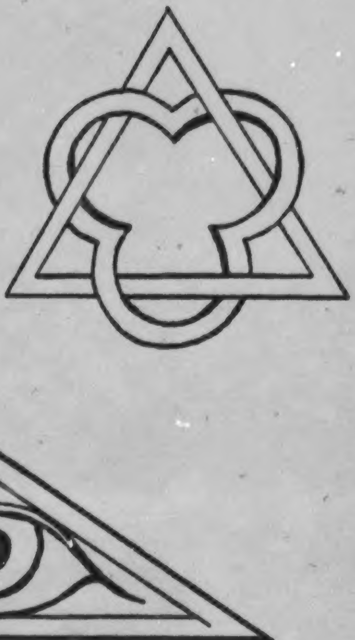


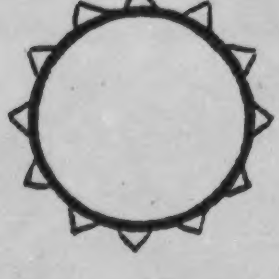


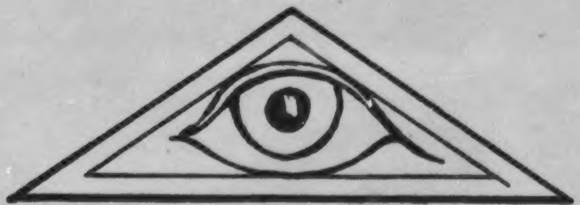










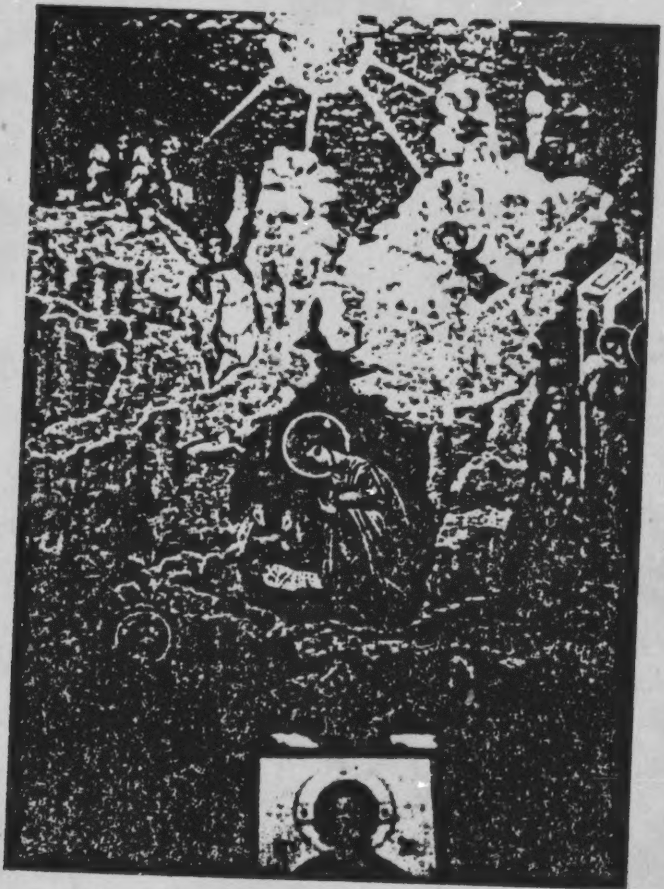


Suggested activities

1. Visit the art exhibit at the National Bank of Greece. In what manner is the new and old art similar?
2. Visit and describe the mosaic altar of St. John's Church in Des Plaines, Illinois.

Evaluation

1. Give five examples of common symbols used in Christian mosaic art and explain their meaning.



An Icon in mosaic

Related topics:

Folk theatre
Satire

Ethnic group: Greeks

Theme: Relationship to homeland

TOPIC: KARAGIOZI THEATRE

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. summarize briefly the history of Karagiozi theatre since 400 B.C.;
2. briefly explain the purpose of Karagiozi plays;
3. describe one typical situation in a Karagiozi play;
4. improvise a dialogue between two or more Karagiozi-type puppets.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

A people carry with them into a new country needs and wants which escape the careful eye of immigration officials. These longings and aspirations are not economic. They do not represent a massive "I want" chorus. Rather, there seems to exist within society a need for community, for purpose and meaning, for beauty and order. These collective needs are frequently expressed and satisfied by the work of individual artists—poets, painters, musicians. The artist may not consciously ask, "Ah, now today what shall I create on behalf of my people?" But the work that the artist creates represents not only the way he or she sees reality, but also the way their people view the world. If it were otherwise, the artist and the people would not be able to communicate with each other, and one would not be able to act as spokesman for the larger group.

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Bridge questions

1. Can you give some examples of folk art in the United States today?

2. If folk art, in the traditional sense, seems in such short supply, can you give some explanations for this shortage?
3. In what ways could folk art be encouraged--or is it such a natural expression that it cannot be slowed down or speeded up by outside forces?

KARAGIOZI THEATRE

Karagiozi (Kara-gi-'ozi) shadow puppet theatre is popular among children and adults in Greece and America. Flat paper puppets on sticks represent everyday family and political situations. These plays originated about 400 B.C. Later this type of theatre became popular in Rome where it retained, in many cases, the Greek language. The characters were stereotyped figures. They usually included Father, Mother, two daughters and one doctor. The only other prop was a stick which the father used to beat whoever offended him.

Since the 15th century the Karagiozi figure has been subject to other changes. The name "Karagiozi" literally means "Black eye." This particular father figure originated in Asia Minor in the years following the Ottoman conquest. According to this tradition he is an exaggerated man with a humped back and one arm longer than the other. He is the slave to the Turkish Paska, who continuously takes advantage of him. His two sons continually ridicule him. Even his wife does not remember who he is. In revenge, the husband beats her constantly. The family is united only in their scheming efforts to take advantage of rich relatives. The father is always accompanied by a friend, Hadjajaris, who offers him advice, sometimes wise, sometimes foolish. The names of the actors can be changed to fit the different regional characters or different professions in Greece.

Karagiozi plays are not written. The dialogue between the different actors is improvised, made up by the puppeteer. The chief characteristic of all Karagiozi plays is satire—poking fun at human behavior, especially human vanity, greed, love of power, hypocrisy. The satire is based upon the double standard of the ruler and the slave. While the ruler is present, the slave always tries to please him. While the ruler is away, the slave plans his destruction. The ruler is generally a man who sees things only as he wishes to see them, and is therefore easily deceived. In one famous play, the Pasha insists that Karagiozi is a doctor. Karagiozi replies that he isn't. The Pasha beats him until he complies with the Pasha's opinion. Karagiozi prescribes liquid cement for the Pasha's daughter. Her condition becomes worse. Karagiozi is beaten again because his medicine has failed to help the Pasha's daughter. What can Karagiozi do? He goes home to beat his wife. The system of destruction is: Pasha, Karagiozi, Wife (Karagiozena), children (Kolitiri).

Suggested activities

1. Ask the students to create a dialogue using Karagiozi puppets they have made. Material needed: cut outs of Karagiozi, Karagiozena, Kolitiri, Yiatre (Doctor). Steps which need to be completed:

    Make and color puppets.
    Select a situation for the characters.
    Divide the action into three acts.
    If possible, use an interlude of Greek music between acts.
    Tape the improvised dialogue.
    Discuss each act separately in terms of dialogue changes and character development.

2. For class discussion:

    What are the distinctions between characters?

    Who is trying to fool whom about what?

    How is the secret discovered?

3. For research and possible field trip: Call a Greek newspaper and find out when the next Karagiozi show will be.

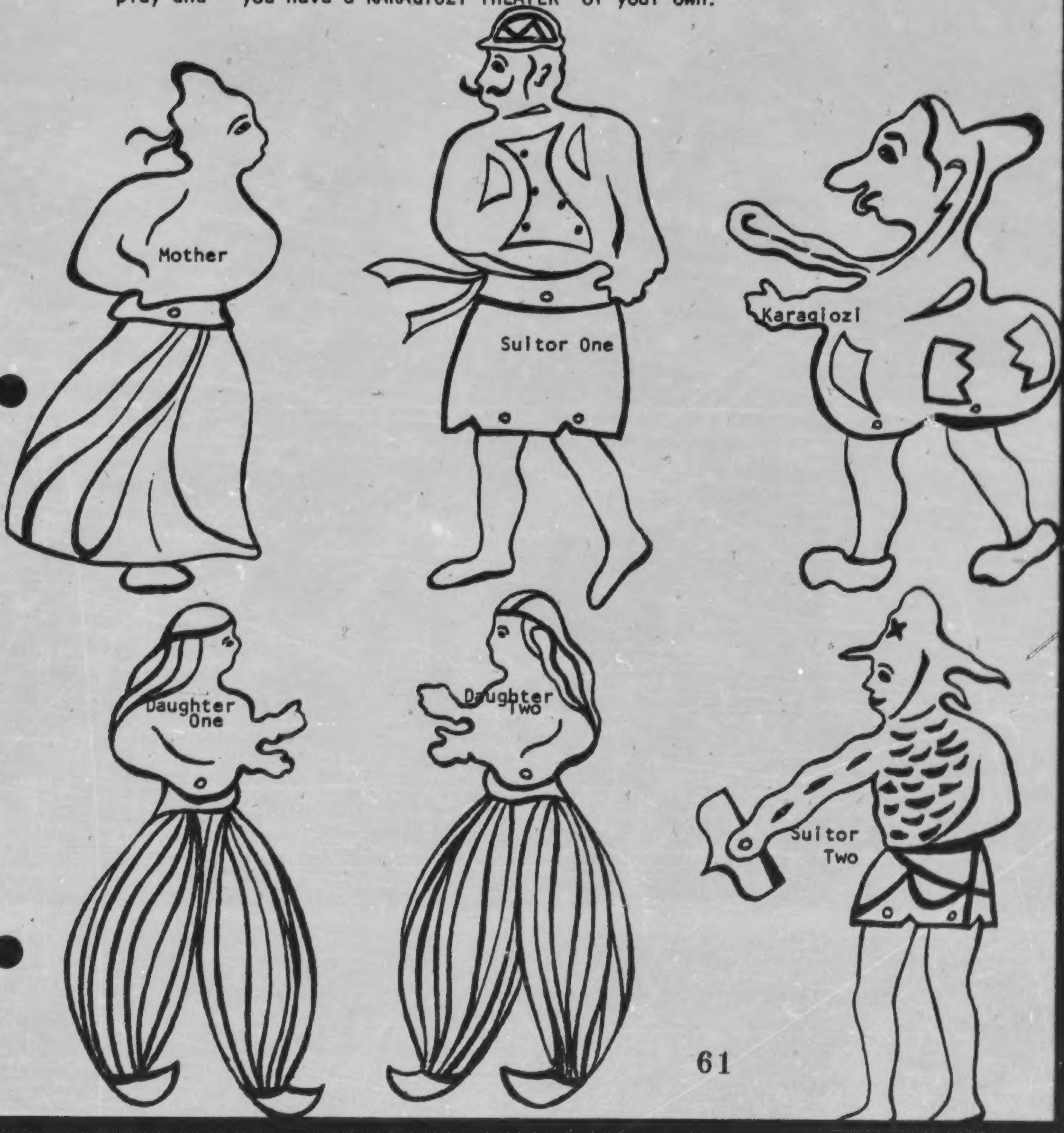
Source: Rust, Elinor. Karaghioz. M.A. thesis, 1961 at Columbia University.

Evaluation

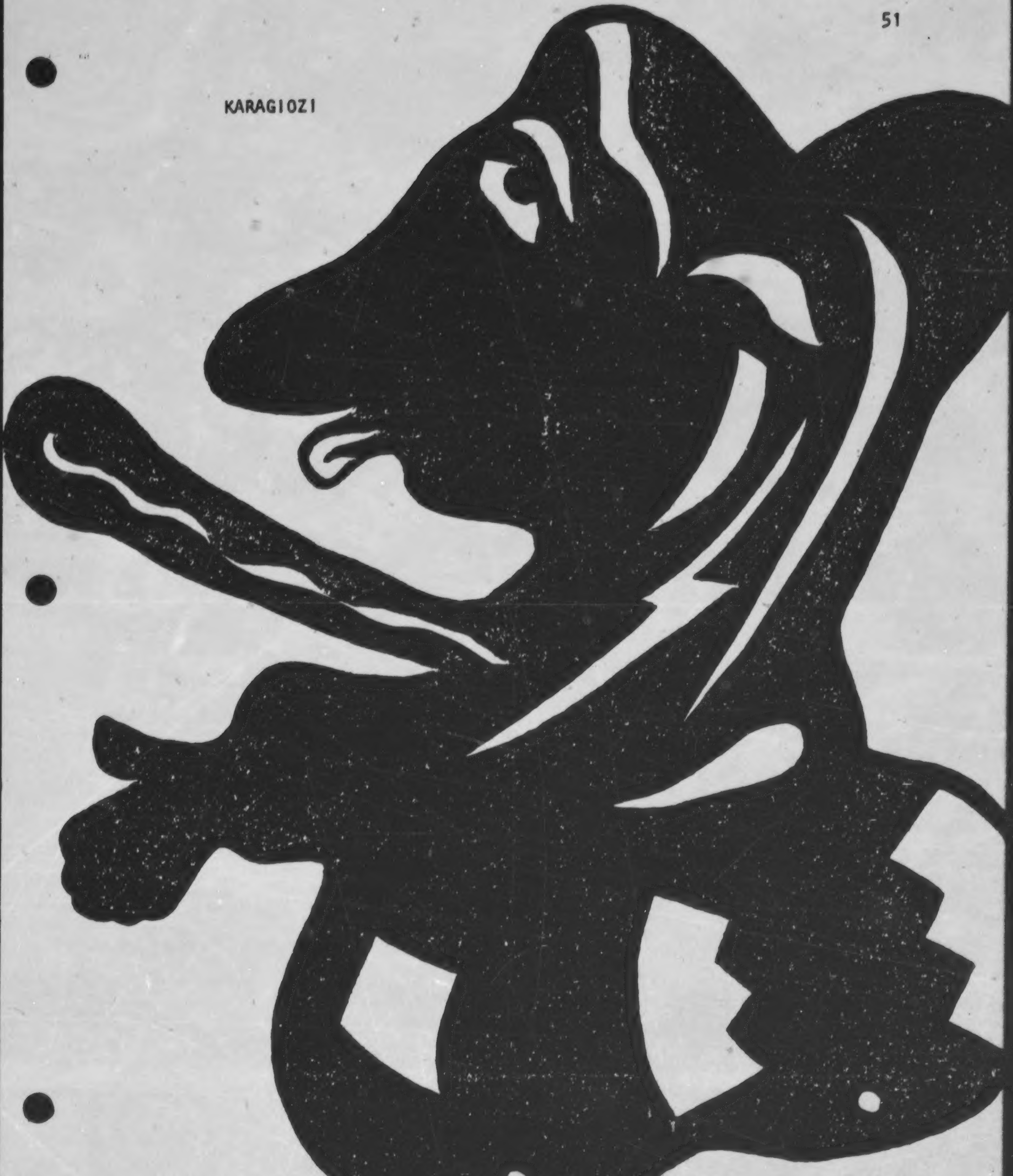
1. See items listed in "Behavioral objective" section.
2. After the members of the class have presented their different versions of Karagiozi theatre, select (after class discussion) three plays to be presented to other grades or classes in your school.

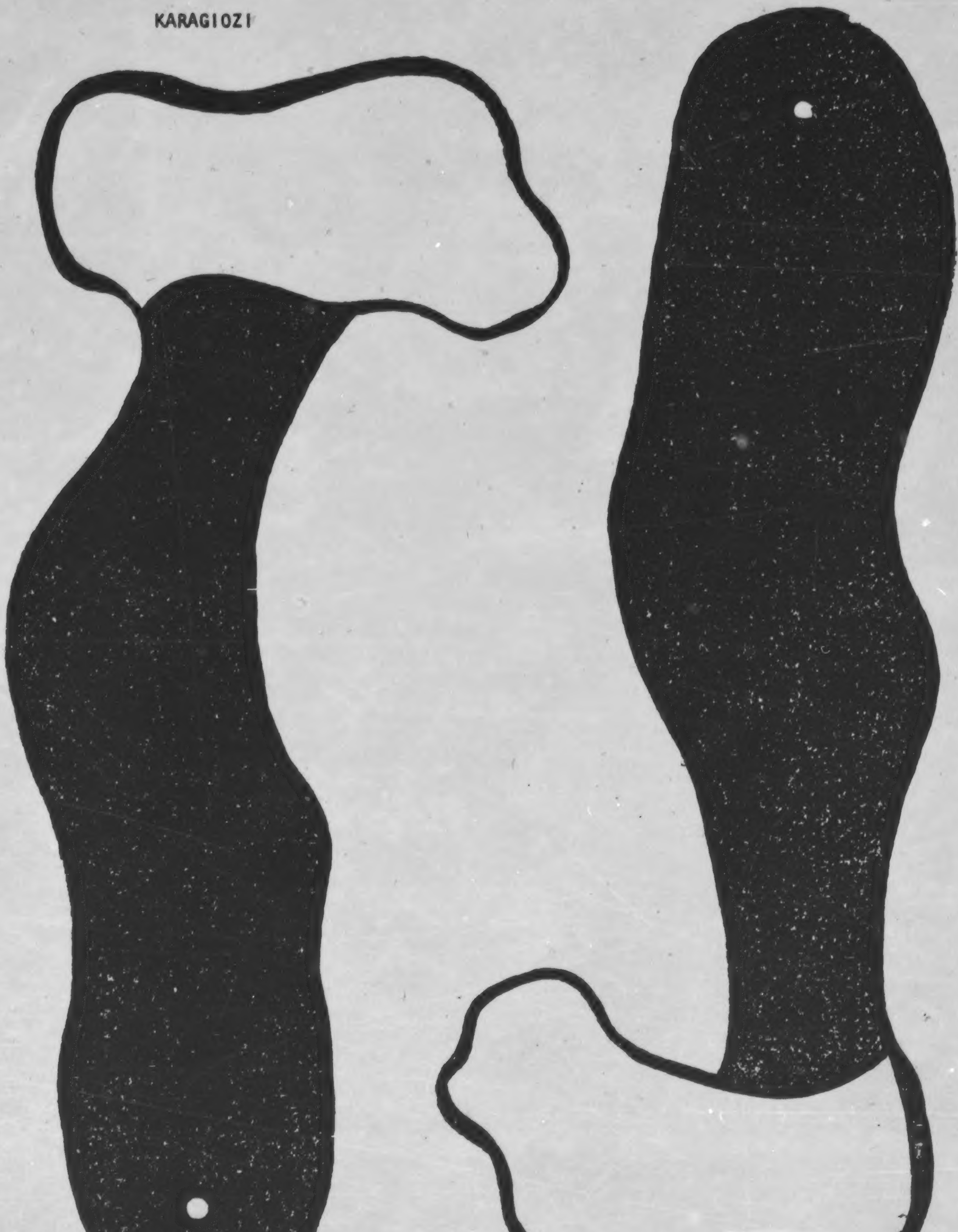
KARAGIOZI THEATER

You can put your own Karagiozi Theater presentation. Cut out the figures on the following pages put them together with two-pronged brass holders which will permit the figures to move. color them brightly, write your own play and - you have a KARAGIOZI THEATER of your own.

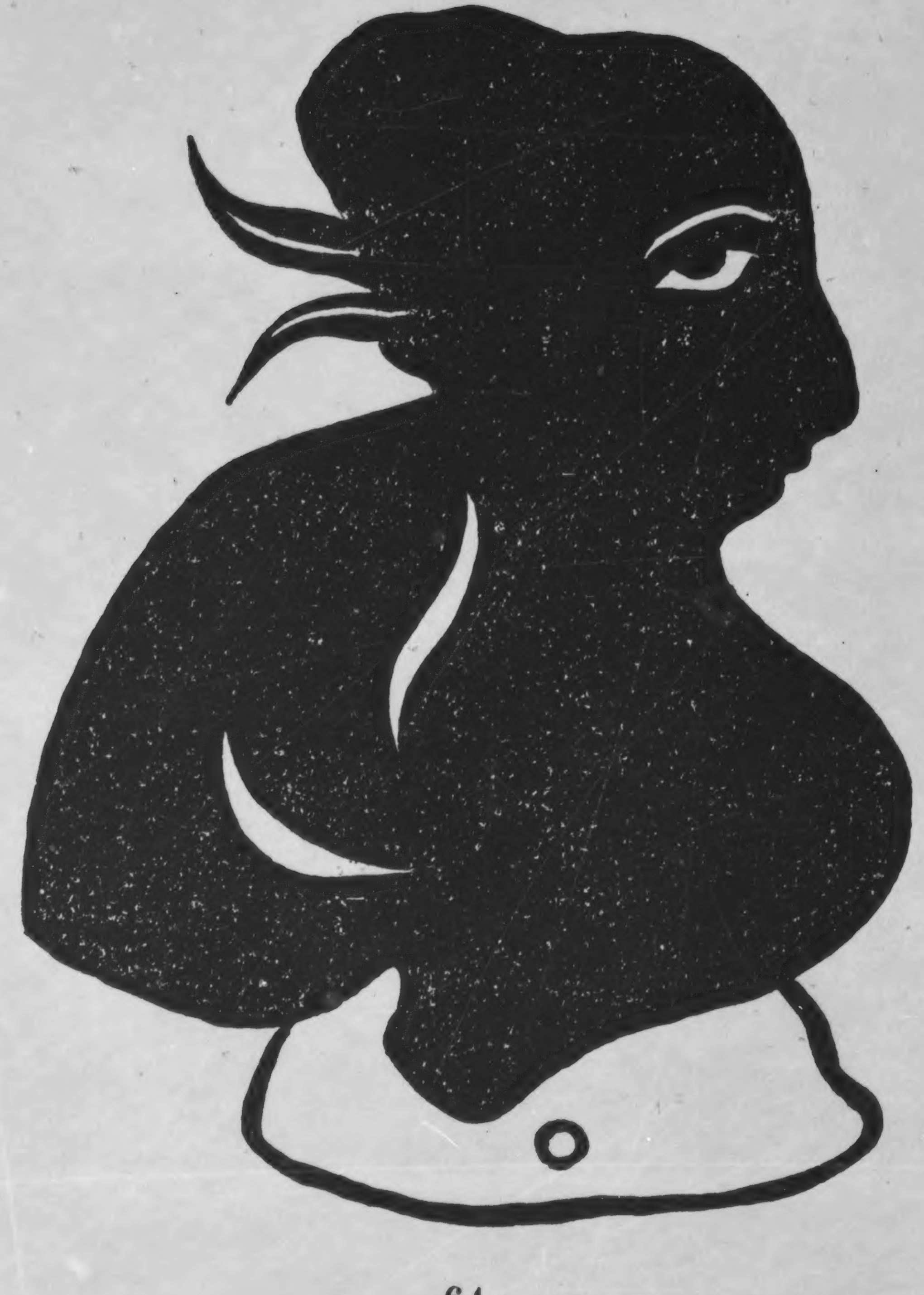

Mother
Suitor One
Karagiozi
Daughter One
Daughter Two
Suitor Two

KARAGIOZI





MOTHER



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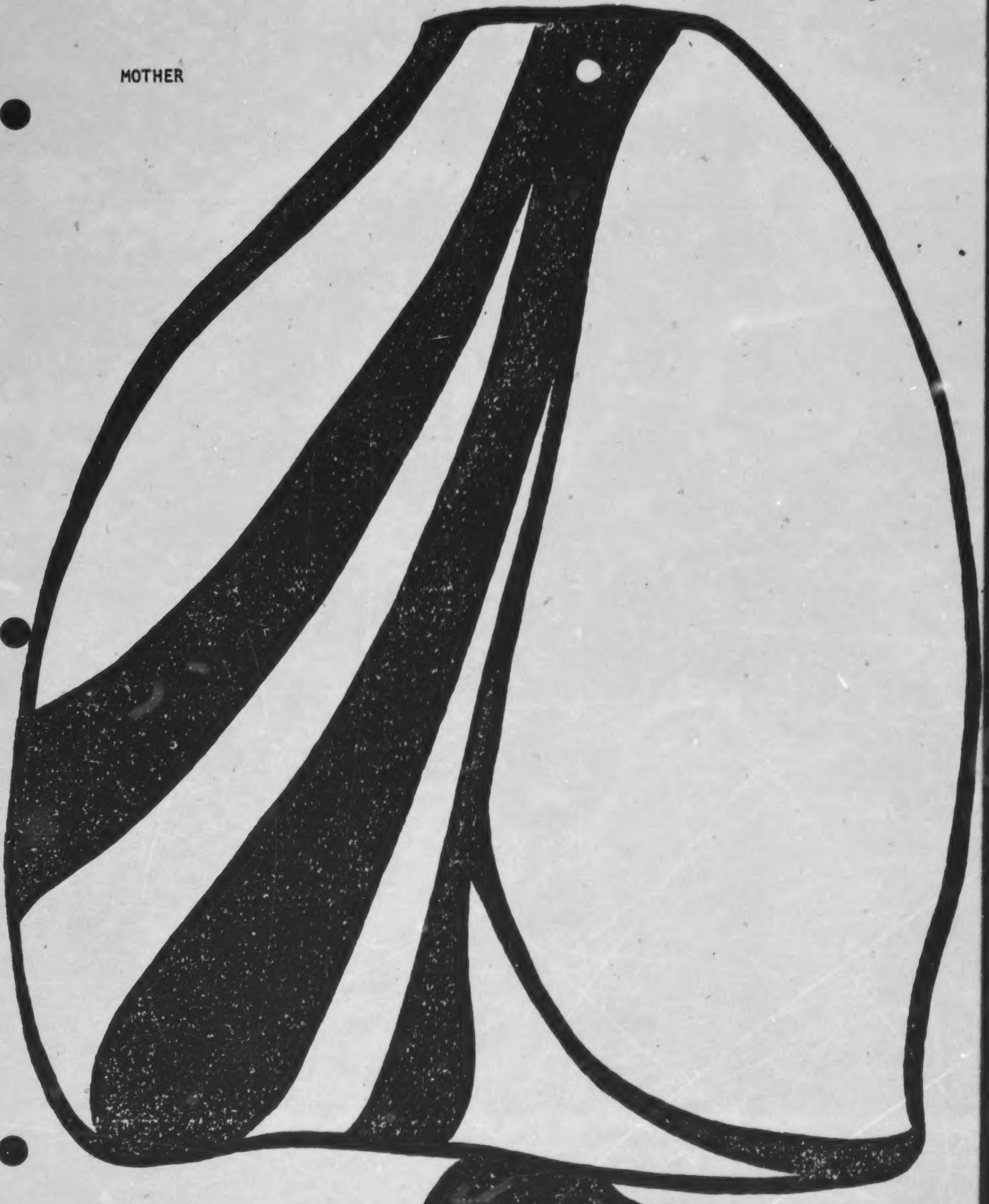
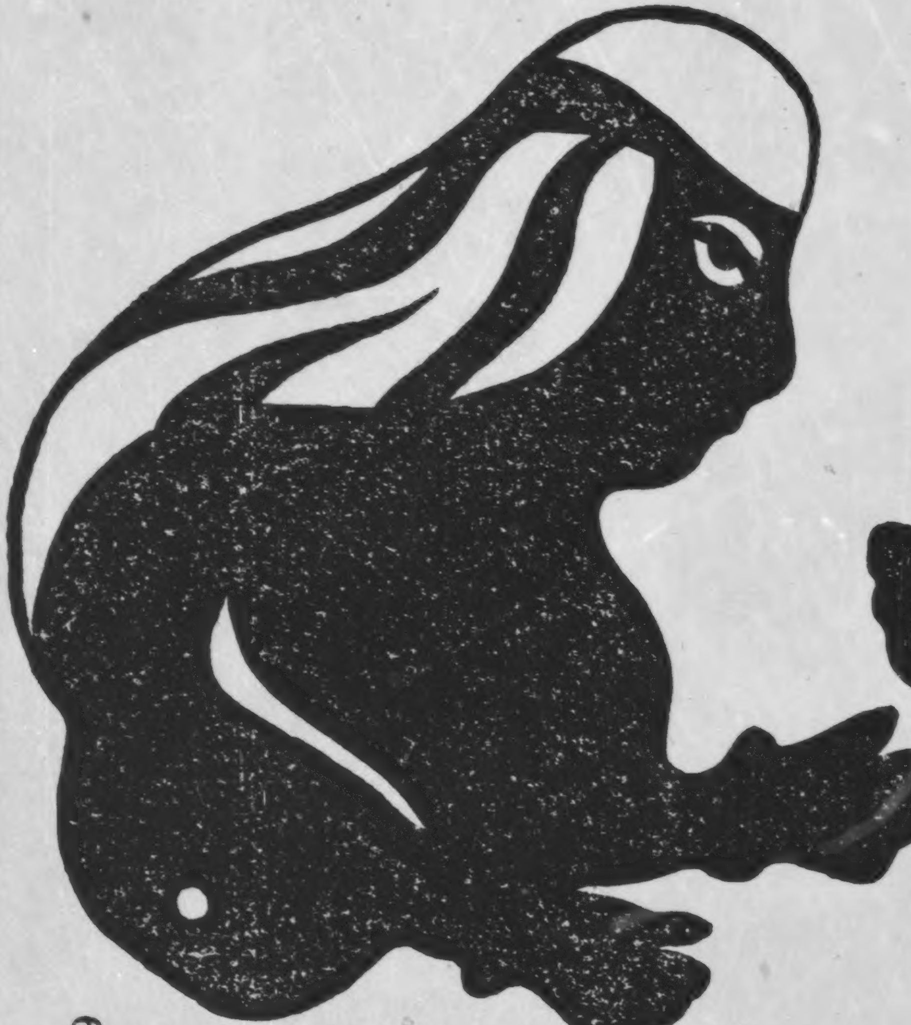


DAUGHTER ONE



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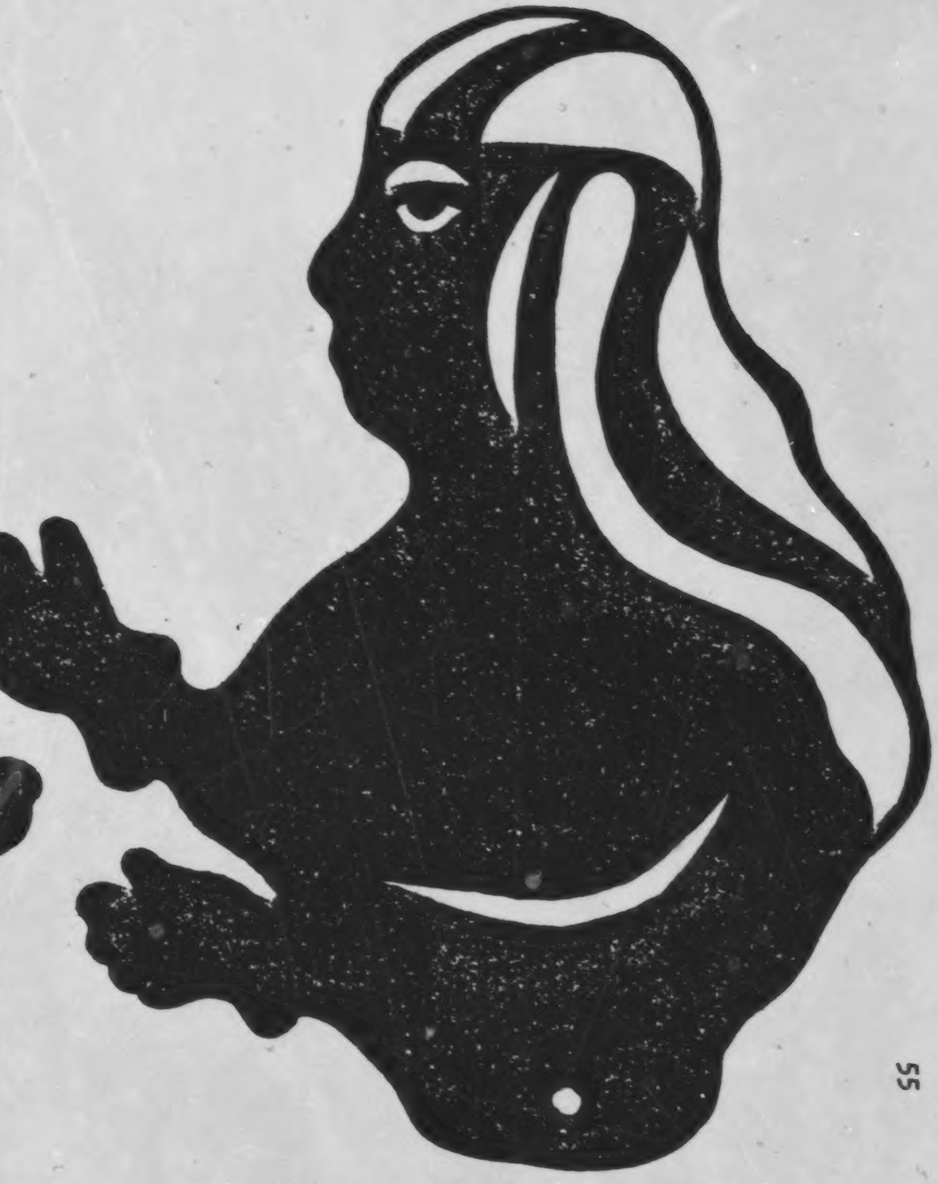

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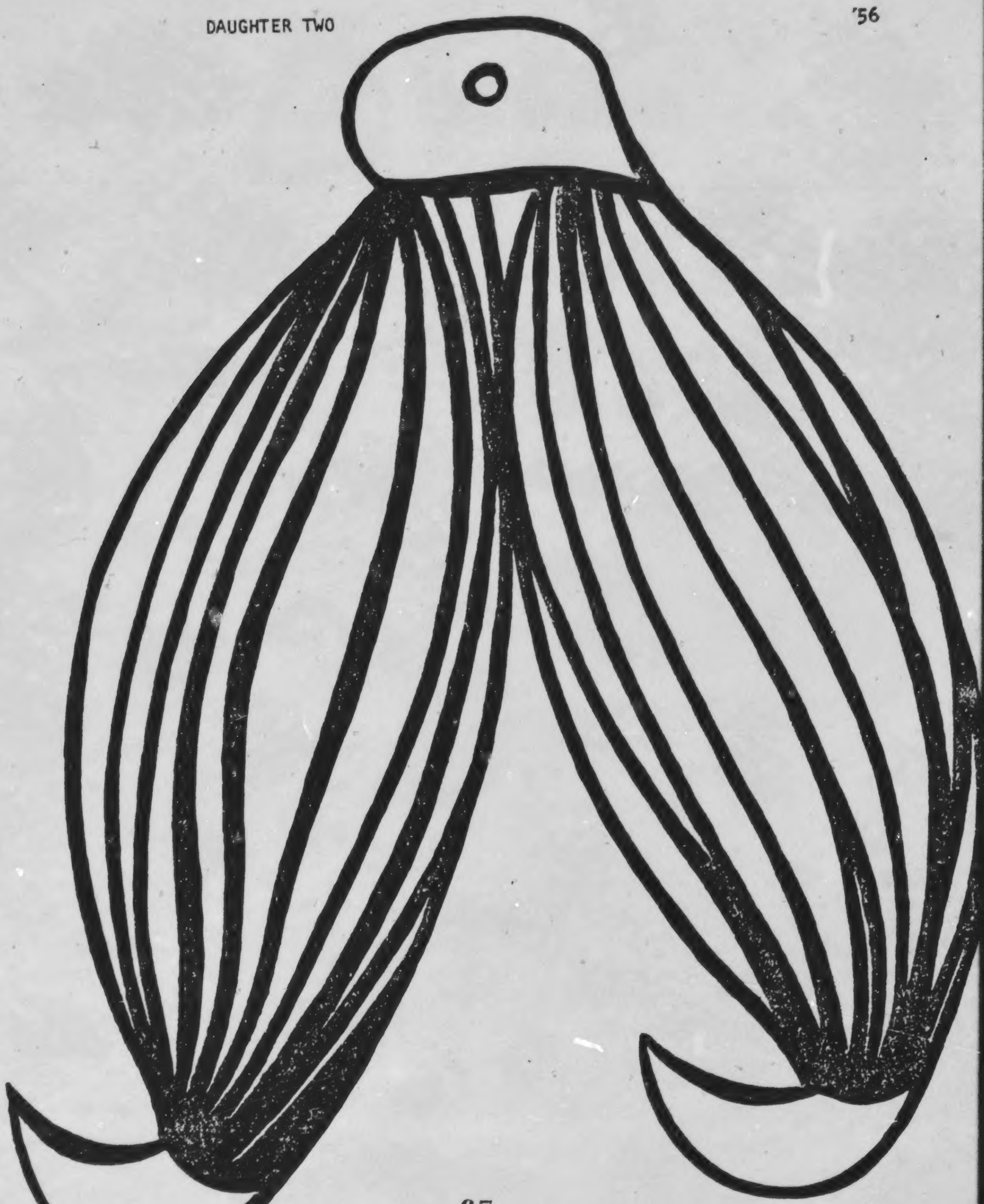

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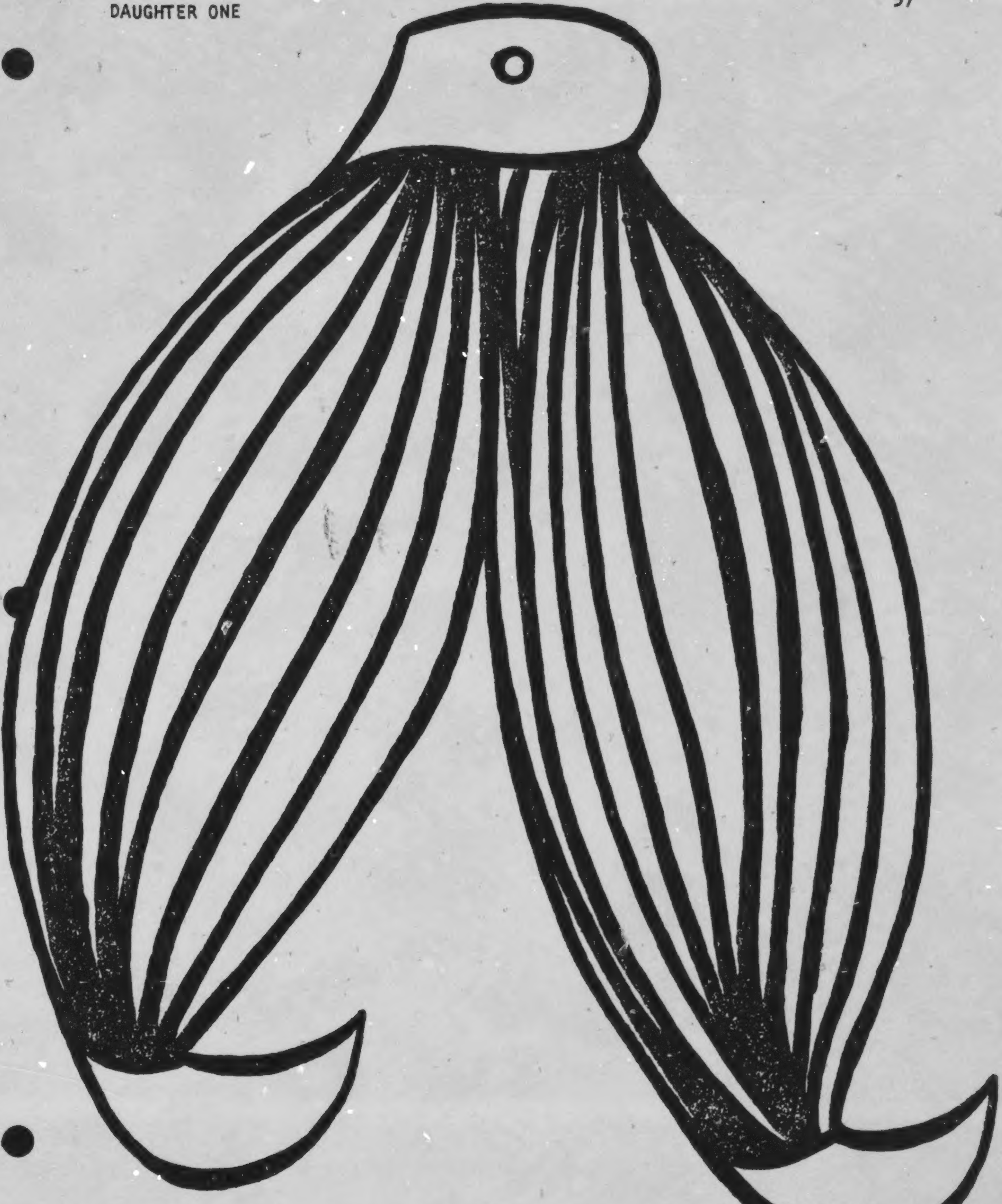

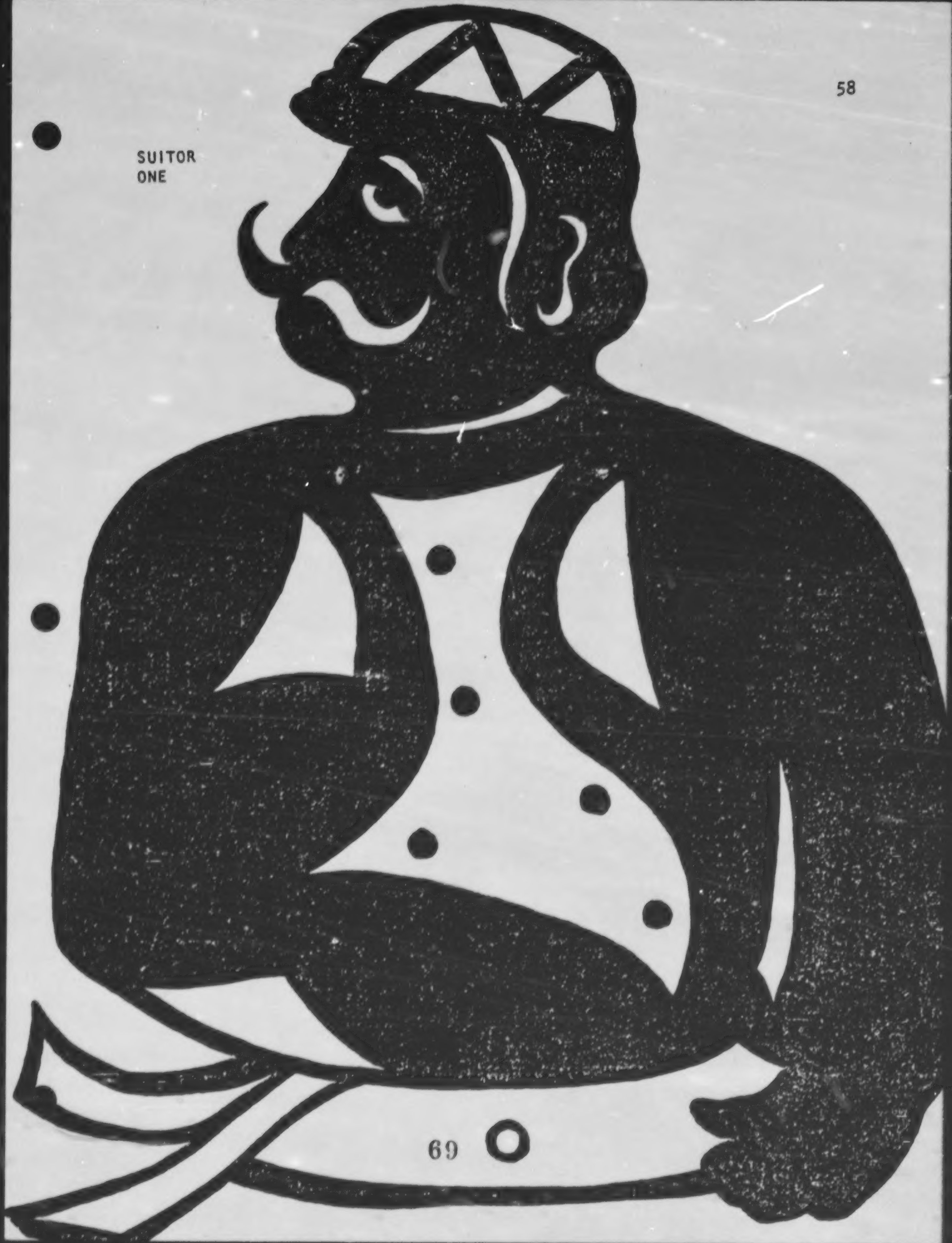
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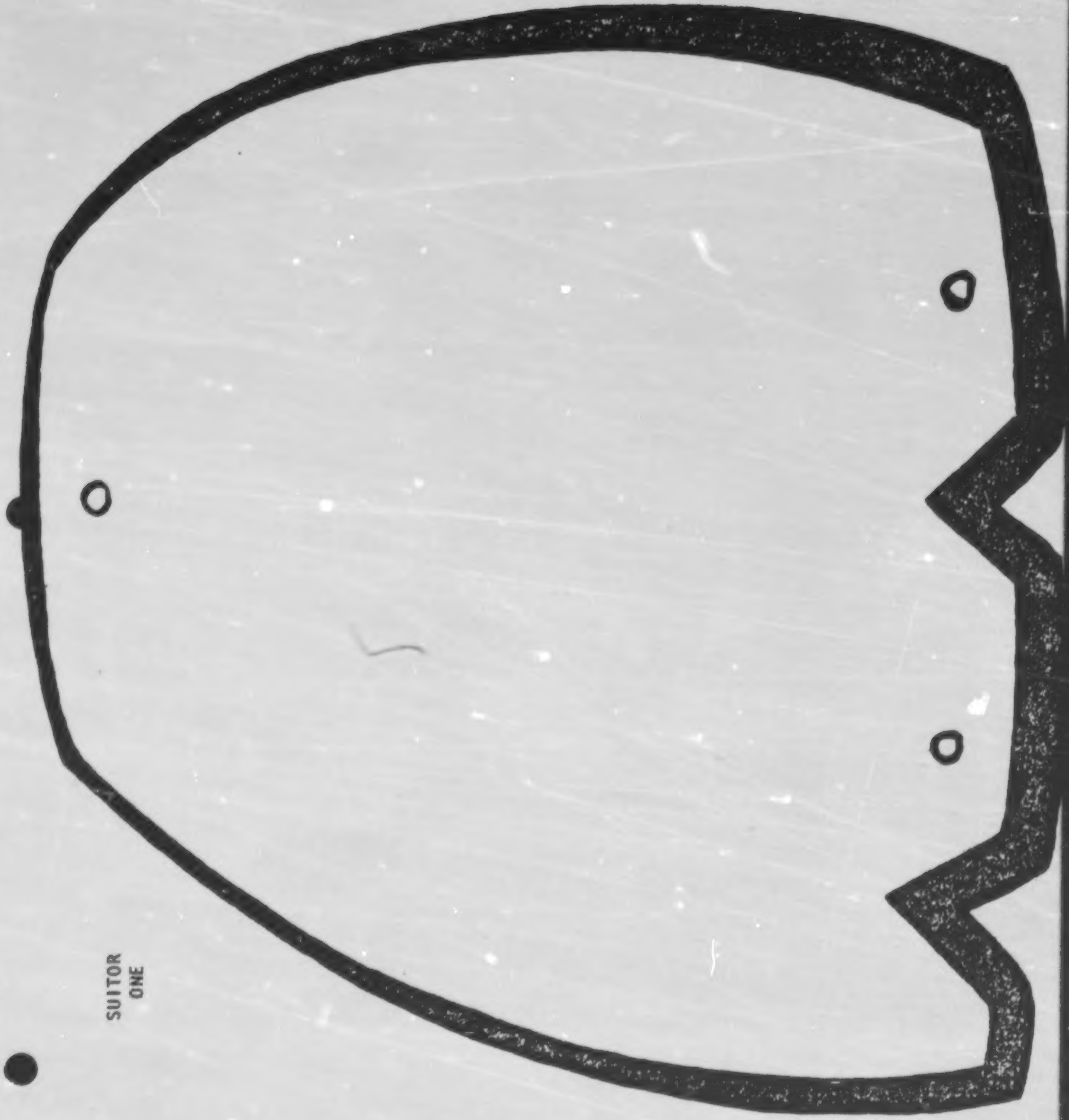
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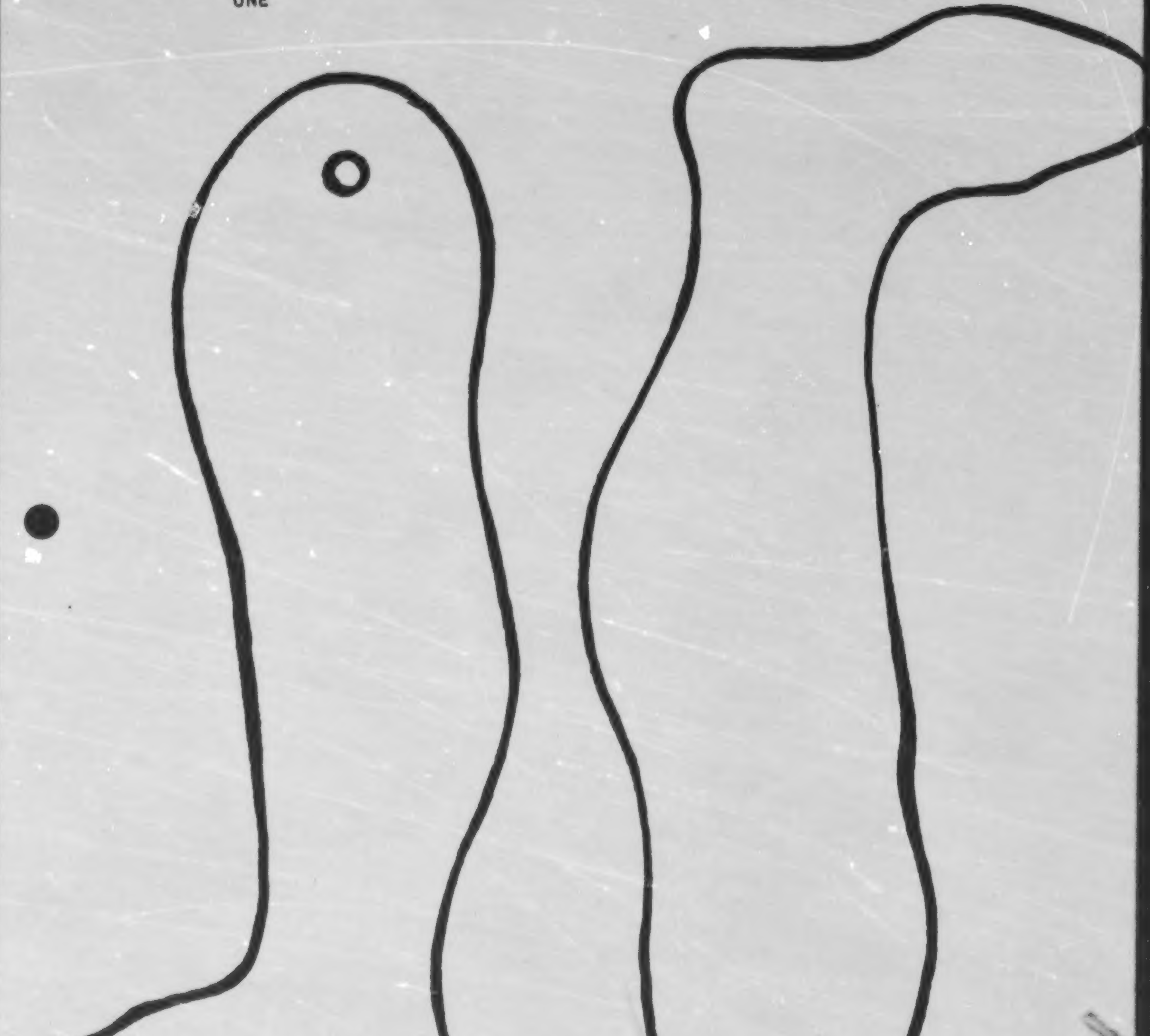
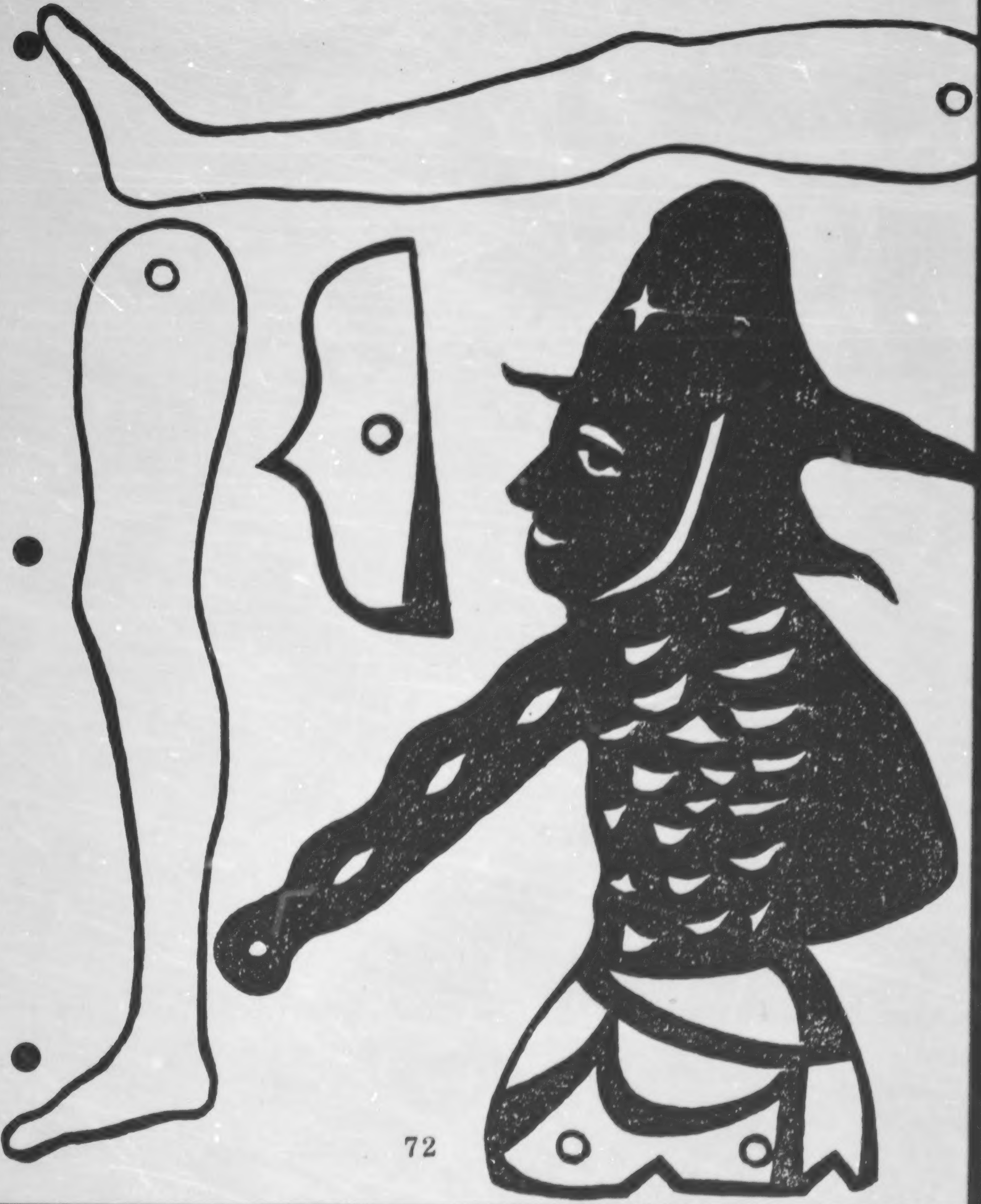




Related topics:

Folk dance
Musical instruments

Ethnic group: Greeks

Theme: Contributions

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. indicate an understanding of dance as a symbolic language;
2. name either one type of Greek folk music or a typical Greek musical instrument.

GREEK FOLK MUSIC

Sometimes we do not need words to communicate with each other. Our gestures, facial expressions or the attitudes of our body often convey more about our thoughts and feelings than words. When we deliberately organize and structure such silent means of communication, and eliminate verbal language altogether, the result will be the art of the dance. A dance brings people together into a very close group: sharing and imitating its intricate movements in common rhythm gives the participants the impression that their individual bodies have merged into a single body. Perhaps this feeling of unity is one of the main reasons that all ethnic communities are careful to preserve their folk dances.

Since ancient times the dance has been an important mode of expression among the Greeks. In the pagan temples of Ancient Greece the dance was a form of prayer to gods and goddesses. When Christianity took over, the dance lost its precise religious significance, remaining nevertheless very much a part of people's lives and even church rites. The marriage dance around the altar table during a Greek Orthodox wedding ceremony is a good example of such transformation.

While a group enjoys a dance, the onlookers accompany the dancers with a song. Folk songs, like dancing, have the power of uniting a gathering into a single body. Besides their melodies and words remind newcomers to this country of the homeland they left behind. The songs and dances of the Greek villagers express the joys and sorrows of their daily lives: love, matchmaking, marriage, baptism, a lullaby for a newborn child. The Greek funeral lament, with its appropriate gestures and set words, is a kind of sorrowful dance and song for the dead.

Songs and dances also express the Greek's people's political aspirations. There is a large group of so-called *klehpt* songs which tell of the freedom fighters in the Greek Revolution of 1821.

Greeks even have their own blues. While some men dance, others sing slow and sad melodies about their harsh life, tragic love and betrayal by friends. Such music and dancing is called *rebetic*. The celebrated film *Zorba* featured *rebetic* music. When people of Spanish ancestry hear the songs of the rebetic tradition, they think of the *canto jondo*, while people of Portugese ancestry are reminded of their native *fado*. Westerners find such music and dancing difficult to perform. In addition to full tones and half tones, the songs feature quarter tones, while the dance steps are very slow, precise and intricate.

Greek dancers and singers are often accompanied by the sound of the *bouzouki*. It is a string instrument, similar to a mandolin. Although the the *bouzouki* had its beginnings as a humble folk instrument, it has become so popular and important that Greek composers of classical music write concertos for it. Greek immigrants introduced Americans not only to the bouzouki but to many other folk instruments of their native country. For example, there is the douli or a large double drum. The santouri is a type of dulcimer or zyther, whose strings are struck by two cotton-covered wooden mallets. The pipiza is a double reed, with six or seven finger holes. It is approximately a foot long, and its sound is uncommonly shrill and loud.

In recent times, folk dancing and folk music have been refined and modernized to form the foundation of Greek popular music. Mikis Theodorakis, who is also a classical composer, has written many popular songs based on folk melodies. The famous Greek movie star Melina Mercouri and the popular vocalist Nana Mouskouri have made his songs known throughout the world. Theodorakis also wrote the music for the films Phaedra, Zorba and Z which enjoyed great popularity in the United States a few years ago. Using folk melodies and motifs in popular music is not such a rare phenomenon. Think of the American country rock music that you hear on your radio every day. It too is a combination of old American traditions and our contemporary culture.

If you live in a large American city, you will have no trouble sampling some Greek music. All you have to do is play with your radio dial until you find a Greek program. As for Greek dancing, the best way to learn about it is to get invited to a Greek wedding.

CULTURAL PATTERNS:

EUROPE AND SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

INDIVIDUALS OF EUROPEAN ORIGIN WHO CONTRIBUTED TO AMERICAN LIFE

OUTSTANDING AMERICAN GREEKS

Related topics:

Mass Migration
Tradition
  Conflict between young
  people and old customs

Ethnic group: Greeks

Theme: Contributions

TOPIC: SOME ILLUSTRIOUS GREEK AMERICANS

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. describe the specific contributions made by three Greek Americans in the United States in the past century;
2. give two examples showing how some of these individuals broke traditional Greek customs and explain the reasons for breaking the traditions.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

Shakespeare compared the different stages in the life of an individual to a career of an actor who played many different parts in a lifetime. But we also know that even in one day the individual has many parts to play. The individuals in your class assume the role of student, but they are also brother or sister, son or daughter, nephew or niece, friend or stranger. Some of their roles are also played by their teacher who may have additional roles—cook, dressmaker, union member, lover, graduate student or home-owner. Sometimes the roles are in conflict; the mature individual knows which roles are most important and is able to adjust the conflicting demands.

Immigrants and their descendants, like Shakespeare's actors, have performed varied roles in American society. Often the newcomers suffered from the stigma frequently attached to newcomers. As they made the transition from Old World to New World they were forced to make choices.

Some retained all their former ways and made no changes. Some did just the opposite—denied their ethnic heritage and completely accepted the American way. Still others successfully combined both the traditional and American culture. They became effective, participating members of two communities—one a creation of the New World, the other a product of the Old World traditions and loyalties.

Bridge questions

1. Can you list the reasons why someone would not want to change their traditional ways of doing things—their religion, language and values?
2. List the reasons why someone might wish to do the opposite—abandon all of their old ways of doing things.
3. How difficult or easy would it be to attempt to combine both the old and the new? What advantages might there be in such a combination? What disadvantages?

ILLUSTRIOUS GREEK AMERICANS

Michael Anagnos was a member of the first wave of Greek migrants to the United States. Like most of the Greeks of his time, he was born in a small village. He hungered for knowledge of the outside world, won a scholarship and later studied philosophy at the University of Athens. He became a newspaperman, then the editor of a daily paper but eventually was imprisoned because his political views were hostile to the government.

His first contact with Americans was made through Samuel G. Howe, an American doctor who was interested in aiding Greek refugees from the civil wars on Crete. When Howe returned to Boston, Anagnos accompanied him as secretary and interpreter. There the young Greek immigrant fell in love with Howe's daughter, Julia. Eventually, in 1876, Anagnos succeeded Howe as head of the Perkins Institute. Under his direction, the school established a national reputation: among its distinguished members was Ann Sullivan who later achieved fame as the teacher of Helen Keller. Anagnos established a kindergarten for blind children and a press for printing books for the blind.

Other Greek Americans had a high regard for Anagnos' skill and ability. They elected him president of their association to promote the unity of Greeks all over the world. He himself contributed large sums of money and a portion of his estate to help establish a school in Greece which poor children could attend without paying tuition.

George Papanicolaou was born in Koumi in 1883. Like other bright Greek scientists, he first studied medicine at the University of Athens and continued his studies in Germany. When war with the Ottoman Empire began in 1912 he volunteered to serve in the Greek medical corps. Once the war was over he left Greece and migrated to the United States with his family.

The origins of cancer posed tough questions for a man fascinated by medical research. With another researcher, Charles Stockard, Papanicolaou started by examining ovarian cycles of guinea pigs. Research into the causes and detection of cancer continued for 40 years. Slowly they became aware that early signs of uterine cancer could be discovered if a small amount of tissue from the cervix could be examined with a microscope. The test, called a "Pap smear" in honor of Papanicolaou became recognized as one of the best early-warning signals for the detection of cervical cancer.

Dimitri Mitropoulos first visited the United States in 1936 as a guest conductor in Boston. He remained to conduct the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra for twelve years. He excelled in the interpretation of nineteenth and twentieth century scores.

Mitropoulos was born in Athens in 1896. His father, a leather merchant, was the son of a Greek Orthodox priest. Dimitri studied piano from the age of seven; when he was fourteen he began composition, principally for the theater, and was soon supplying music for the tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides.

Throughout his conservatory years he was expected to enter the monastery at Mt. Athos, as had two of his uncles. When he learned that he would have to abandon music, he decided not to become a monk. After he served as a drummer in the Balkan War, 1912-1914, he entered the University of Athens. Later he studied composition in Brussels and Berlin, where his teacher, Busoni, criticized him for having too much passion.

Sergei Koussevitzky, director of the Boston Symphony, invited Mitropoulos to America in 1936. Ten years later he became a United States citizen. In the following twelve years he established the Minneapolis Symphony as one of the most notable orchestras in the country.

From 1943-53, while he led the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, Dimitri Mitropoulos lived quietly in a small hotel in New York. His diet was spartan. His chief diversions were mountain climbing and reading philosophers such as Plato, Nietszche, or Greek dramatists.

James Christopher migrated from Greece to California in 1895. He worked in Sacramento, became a U.S. citizen, returned to Greece, and was married. A son, George, was born in 1907; three years later the entire family returned to San Francisco.

George Christopher grew up in one of the toughest sections of the city. The family survived through the labor of his father who owned a seven-stool restaurant at Third and Minna Streets. When his father became seriously ill, George quit high school at the age of 14. He found work with the San Francisco Examiner. During his free time he continued his education; after eight years of night classes, he received his B.A. degree.

The courtship between George Christopher and his wife, Tula, was that of traditional first generation Greek Americans: they never were alone until they were engaged. When they were engaged, George's mother was opposed. She said he didn't have enough money to marry. She was also opposed to his marriage because it was customary in the Greek home that the eldest son remain single and marry off his sisters before settling down. George paid no attention to the custom and proceeded with plans for his wedding.

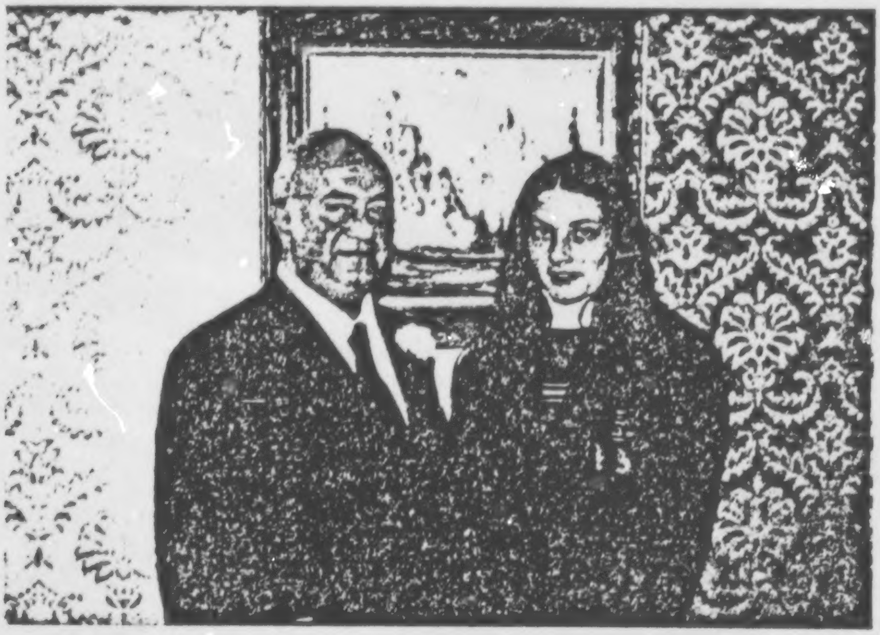
In 1956 George Christopher broke another tradition by becoming the first Greek American mayor of San Francisco.

The experiences of Constantine Doxiades perhaps represent a different tradition among Greek immigrants. Like Papanicolaou and Mitropoulos, Doxiades left Greece to study in Germany but returned and remained in Greece during the Nazi occupation of World War II.

Doxiades' training in architecture and design at the Bauhaus School was of great value in the reconstruction period after 1945. At that time he began to develop his ideas of ekistics—a Greek word meaning "home." His theories took into consideration not only the present but also the future needs of people and their relationship to the environment. Doxiades wrote: "Man cannot live next to noise and fast speed without developing mental problems... Ekistics brings together the architect, engineer, town planner, sociologist, geographer and psychologist."

During the 1950's Doxiades pursued his interests in architecture and city planning in the United States. He lectured at famous universities and for more than ten years lived in different parts of the country. Finally he had an opportunity to put some of his theories into practice: the federal government asked him to design a 2,500 acre urban renewal project in Philadelphia.

Doxiades held onto his Greek citizenship and his membership in the Greek Orthodox Church but married an American citizen. His travels throughout the world made him aware of the needs and aspirations of all people, no matter what their citizenship. Perhaps it was from his father's profession as a children's doctor that Doxiades inherited a concern for human suffering. Before his death in June, 1975, Doxiades said: "To those who suffer and live under inhuman conditions, and make me suffer with them, I owe my greatest gratitude."



Andrew Athens President of the American Hellenic Congress and Lea Poulos, Olympic swimming star.

Activities

Ask children to name different professions, occupations, or arts that have been important in American society. They can write them in their notebooks or you can put their suggestions on the blackboard in one column. Ask the children if they know any outstanding individuals that they can identify with the categories in the first column.

Evaluation

1. Name two Greek Americans who have become outstanding in their professions.
2. What contributions did they make to modern life?
3. Did these individuals have obstacles to overcome or conflicts to resolve? What were they?

Related topics:

Mass Migration
Tradition
  Conflict between young
  people and old customs

Etnic group: Greeks

Theme: Contributions

Behavioral Objective

The student should be able to

1. list six Greek Americans who have achieved prominence in American society;
2. give at least three examples of the way in which these individuals have made contributions or provided services to the Greek community in the United States and in Greece;
3. give at least three examples of the way in which these individuals have made contributions or provided services to non-Greek Americans.

SOME GREEKS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO AMERICAN LIFE

Many Greek Americans have contributed in some way to American society. Perhaps you are familiar with some of them. A clue is that Greek names sometimes end in es, is, or poulos. Perhaps you will be surprised to find out they're Greek. How can you tell if a name is Spanish, Polish, Russian, Ukranian, English, Irish, Italian, German, or Jewish?

Michael Bakalis	Born in Illinois, son of Greek immigrants. He is a former Illinois State Superintendent of Public Instruction. In November, 1976, he was a candidate for the Illinois office of State Comptroller.

Maria Callas	Daughter of immigrants. She was born in New York. Her father was a pharmacist. They returned to Greece, and again to New York, where Maria studied opera. She has performed with the Metropolitan Opera, the Milan Opera, and Chicago's Lyric Opera. She is known for her roles in Carmen, Norma, and her movie, Medea.
John Cassavetes	Born in New York. He is a film writer and director. He has won awards for his films, Faces, and A Woman Under the Influence.
George Chicaris	Actor and dancer who won an Academy Award for his role in West Side Story.
James Galanos	Fashion designer who has won many international awards. His designs resemble many ancient Greek costumes.
John Brademas	Democratic Congressman from Indiana, a member of the House Education and Labor Committee. He is chief sponsor of major federal laws in education and the arts, as well as programs for elderly and handicapped.
Katina Paxinou	Actress, born in Greece. She performed with the National Theater of Greece, famous for her roles as Medea, and Jocasta. She won an Academy Award for her portrayal in For Whom the Bell Tolls.
Irene Pappas	Actress, born in Greece. She studied acting in New York, and is known for her role in Electra. She had won international awards for the lead in Antigone, directed by Cacoyiannis. She has played in the American films, America America, Zorba, Z, Dream of Kings. She played the lead in Arthur Miller's play, That Summer, That Fall.
Paul Sarbanes	United States Senator from Maryland, Democrat. He is a Rhodes Scholar and Harvard Law School graduate, widely acclaimed for the role he played in the Nixon Impeachment Inquiry. He authored the First Article of Impeachment adopted by the Judiciary Committee. He has received recognition for his leadership in Congress in checking Turkish aggression in Cyprus. His parents are from Laconia, Greece.

Nana Mouskouri	Singer, born in Greece, now living in California. She is famous for Greek, French, and American Ballads. She made popular in America the music of Hajidakis and Theodorakis. She has toured the country with Harry Belafonte.
Aristotle Onassis	Born in Asia Minor, fled the Turkish invasion of 1922. While in Turkey, he was forbidden to attend school, but managed to learn seven languages on his own. He came to New York at sixteen and married Tina Livanos, the daughter of a rich shipowner. Eventually he became one of the richest men in the world. Second husband of Jaqueline Kennedy. His advice to others was, "Don't sleep more than three hours each night, then, at the end of the year you'll have an extra month left to succeed." He died in 1975 and is buried on the island of Skorpios.
Alex Karras	Son of an immigrant doctor from Gary, Indiana. Former football player with Detroit Lions, he does many T.V. commercials.
Archbishop Lakovos	Greek Orthodox Biship of North and South America. Born in Turkey in 1911, came to the United States in 1934, became Archbishop in 1959. He was one of the presidents in the World Council of Churches and is an active leader in the Ecumenical movement. He was with Martin Luther King Jr. in his march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama.
Elia Kazan	Writer, director, and playwright. Born 1909 in Constantinople. He came to America because of the Turkish pressure on Greeks. Author of America America and The Arrangement. Both deal with Greek heroes and have been made into films. Won Academy Awards for his directing of On the Waterfront, and East of Eden.
Melina Mercouri	Movie actress in Athens. She came to America with her husband, director Jules Dassein. She is known for her roles in He Who Must Die, Stella, Topkapi, Phaedra, and Never on Sunday. She has written her autobiography, Born Greek.

Telly Savelas	Actor and star of *Kojak*.
Harry Mark Petrakis	Author, born in 1923 in St. Louis, the son of a Greek Orthodox priest. His books depict the life of a Greek in America. Some of his books are: *Dream of Kings*, *In the Land of Morning*. His short story, *"Pericles on Thirty First Street,"* depicts the life of immigrants on Chicago's Halsted Street.
Spyro Skouras	Born in the Peloponnesus, and came to America as a young child. He took menial jobs until, in 1914, he and his brothers saved enough money to buy a theater. By 1936 they owned 37 theaters. Spyro studied finance, real estate, and theater management. In 1942 he became head of Twentieth Century Fox. During World War II, with the co-operation of AHEPA, he organized the Greek War Relief Fund which sent over 100 million dollars worth of food, clothing, and medicine to Greece.

HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF AMERICAN GREEKS

Related topics:	Ethnic group: Greeks
Ancient Greece The Byzantine Empire	Theme: Relationship to homeland

TOPIC: GREEK HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. compare the length of Greek, Jewish, Chinese and American traditions;
2. list three ideas or qualities which are an important part of Greek heritage;
3. select one of these ideas which has the greatest influence upon Americans today and explain the reasons for the selection.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

If you travelled about the world and asked different people the meaning of their group's name, there would be a surprising degree of similarity. The Eskimo, the Cheyenne, the Sioux, the Bantu--in every case the word the people use to describe themselves means "the people" or "the first people." Of course they are aware of the fact that many other people inhabit the earth, but they tend to believe that there is something special or different about themselves. They are aware of their own, separate identity as a people, speaking the same language, sharing the same traditions and values. They are different from others. Sometimes this difference is a source of pride, sometimes a cause for grief: an old Sioux holy man once described the great numbers of white people who came into his territory as "more numerous than the leaves upon the trees." But the number of people in each group was less important than the fact that they represented two different traditions, with very different values. This "sense of the past" is sometimes described as an "historical consciousness."

Like the simpler concept of "roots" an historical consciousness provides a people with a sense of their collective past. Usually they regard their origins as being particularly blessed or favored by God or the Fates. They have engaged in titanic struggles with mighty foes and have triumphed. Sometimes their numbers have increased; sometimes their numbers have remained small. To keep their society intact institutions have been established which carefully set down proper rules of conduct for the individual, the family, the clan, the tribe, and the nation as a whole.

Historical consciousness is not limited to families and tribes. The great nation-states of western Europe have even more developed a myth of their uniqueness, and greatness, as a people. This national self-awareness has acted as a spur to immense worldly accomplishments--piling up military victories, material wealth and cultural splendor. While many vital differences in values and traditions exist among them, 16th century Spain and Holland, 17th and 18th century France and England, and 19th century Germany have all exhibited the national belief that destiny was being worked out through the agency of their particular group. In this sense an historical consciousness combined a perception of the past with a blueprint for the future: people who knew where they had been also knew where they were going.

In modern times this sharp sense of the past is sometimes regarded as quaint, or as an anachronism--something no longer fit or appropriate to this age of personal liberty and ease of access to information or travel. In a mobile society where status rises and falls swiftly within one generation such concepts as historical consciousness do not always seem relevant. But it has proved to be more than a retrospective world view. In the case of some ethnic groups it has held the people together in the face of holocaust and unprecedented persecution. In a time of troubles, as well as in times of joy, knowledge of the past has helped them survive till the morrow.

GREEK HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

To be a Greek American means to participate in a long and famous tradition. The Greek heritage has survived for more than three thousand years. What we call Western civilization has its beginnings in Ancient Greece. Many ideas which became the driving forces of our own civilization were conceived and developed in that country. Here we can outline only briefly some of these ideas and attitudes.

The starting point of Greek thought was the questioning attitude of ancient Greek philosophers, a curiosity about themselves as human beings and about the world around them. One of the greatest philosophers of all times, Socrates, summed up this attitude in the following phrase: "A life unexamined is not worth living." In other words ancient Greeks attempted to find the limits of man's rational and intellectual being. It is this insatiable thirst for knowledge that became the mainspring of Western civilization.

Another idea upon which ancient Greeks dwelled was the quality of excellence. They cultivated excellence of body, mind and soul. Excellence to Greeks meant beauty. Also, excellence meant competition. To do things better than others, to break all records, to achieve more than other human beings had ever achieved--this was the ideal toward which a Greek youth strove. Such feelings of competition were especially high during sports games and performances which were held at the town of Olympia. They were called the Olympic Games. The Greek spirit of competition has been inherited by other cultures: the Olympic Games are held all over the world in our time, two and a half thousand years after their inception. Athletes from Europe, the United States, Latin America, Africa and India—from cultural environments often completely foreign to the ancient Greek tradition—are happy to participate in these Games.

But most of all it is our concepts of social and political order that we owe to ancient Greece. The very word "democracy" comes from two Greek words—demos, "the common people" and kratos, "strength or power." Ancient Greeks loved their country deeply and regarded it as the best in the world. Such feelings of patriotism prompted them to search for the best conceivable social order: it would have to be just, good, and must make the Greek people happy. Some philosophers came up with the concept of democracy as the best social order, and hence we often call Ancient Greece the "cradle of democracy."

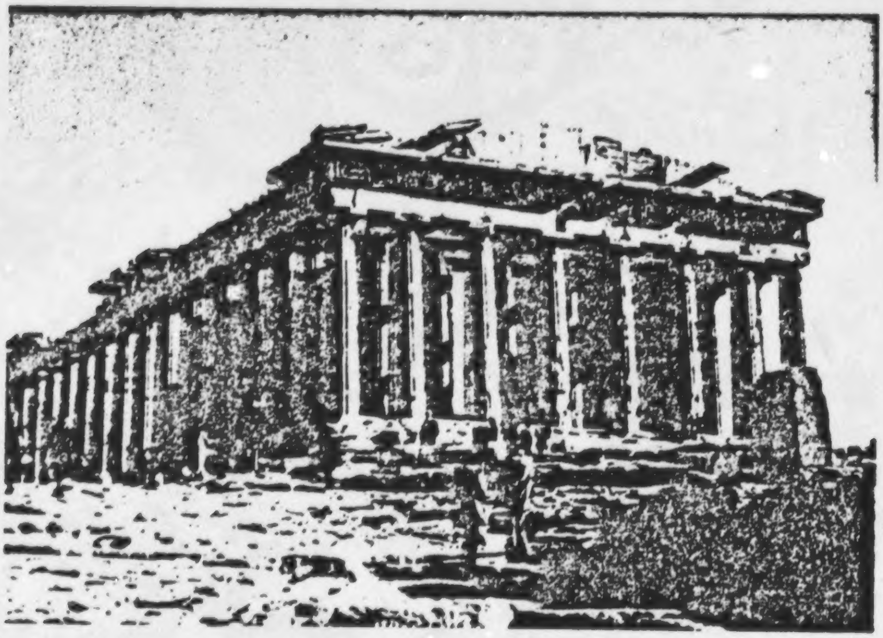
As the Roman Empire grew stronger, it threatened the small Greek states, finally conquering them in the second century B.C. But one may well ask who was the conquered and who the conqueror. The Romans were so impressed by the Greek civilization that they soon adopted many Greek customs and mores. They learned the Greek language, sent their children to Greek schools or hired Greek tutors, and paid high prices for Greek works of art. The Romans disseminated Greek culture throughout the West as far as the Brish Isles. A century earlier the Greek conqueror Alexander the Great had already carried it East as far as Northern India.

One of the Roman Emperors, Constantine the Great, realized that the territory of the Roman Empire was too huge to be governed from Rome alone. We must remember that in those times delivering a letter meant a long ride on horseback, a sea voyage or both. And so, Constantine decided to establish another capital of the Empire in the East. He chose the ancient city of Byzantium, rebuilt it and modestly renamed it Constantinople or "The City of Constantine." Historians and theologians have also called the city "The Second Rome." Constantine made Christianity the city's official religion and ordered a Church to be built in its center.

Constantinople became the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, known in history as the Byzantine Empire. There the influence of the ancient Greek civilization was obviously more pronounced than in Rome, since most of the city's population was of Greek origin and the city's official language was Greek. When Rome fell to barbaric invasions at the end of the fifth century A.D., the once flourishing Roman civilization wilted to near-nothingness, the Byzantine Empire continued to cultivate Greek culture for another thousand years. Byzantine arts and sciences, the Eastern Orthodox religion, and a stable, although somewhat tyrannical, political system, influenced large masses of people in Africa, Asia, Eastern and Southern Europe. It is from Byzantium that Christianity came to Ukraine, Russia, the Balkan countries and even some central and northern European states, mingling with the indigenous pagan cultures of those peoples.

The Byzantine period was a long and glorious period for the Greek people and the Greek culture, although it was rather stable and lacking in the spirit of curiosity, originality and progress that marked the culture of Ancient Greece. It ended when the Turks finally conquered Constantinople in 1453. They renamed the city Istanbul and today it still bears this Turkish name, since it has remained a Turkish city even after the liberation of the Greek people in the War of Independence between 1821 and 1827.

Since the Greeks won their independence from the Turks in the nineteenth century, their liberty has been threatened many times. But it has persevered; today Greece is a free, modern and flourishing nation. Learning about his historical heritage, a Greek American youth can be particularly proud of his ethnic origins. After all, his ancestors were born in a country that is known as the "cradle of Western civilization."



Parthenon in Athens. Greece

Suggested activities

Ask the students to write a family history covering three generations—their grandparents, parents and themselves. They should note where their family has lived, what language they spoke at home, what schools they went to, what kind of jobs they held, etc. Then ask them how this knowledge of their family's history affects their ideas about themselves. Do they desire to continue or abandon the life-styles of their ancestors? How does this knowledge of the family's past affect their plans for the future?

Evaluation

1. Give three examples in which Greek traditions have directly influenced everyday life in the United States.
2. Where does the word "democracy" come from? What does it mean?
3. The Roman Empire carried Greek culture west, as far as the British Isles. To what parts of the world did the Byzantine Empire extend Greek influence?

CONFLICTING INTERESTS WITHIN THE NATION

CULTURAL DIVERSITY: GREEK COMMUNITY IN AMERICA

Related topics:

Greek Orthodox parishes
Ethnic schools

Ethnic group: Greeks

Theme: Contributions

TOPIC: GREEK COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

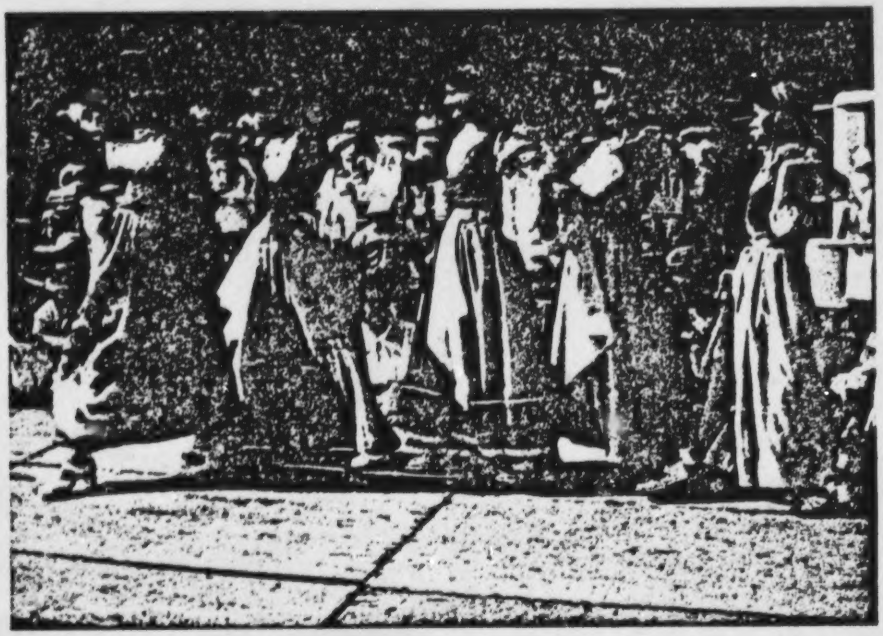
1. relate the importance of the church to the community life of Greeks in America;
2. show how the church promoted schooling among Greeks.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

More than three hundred years ago the English poet and preacher John Donne wrote, "No man is an island, entire of itself." Every man, Donne said, was a part of the continent, and if any part of it was washed away, he was diminished. At a time when tolerance was not a virtue, Donne recognized what astronauts and cosmonauts have been telling us since 1957: we live in one earthly community. We need one another.

But to live in community means to be dependent on others and have others depend on us. That is, we must be understanding of the needs of others and therefore act in a responsible way. If we value living in the society of other human beings, it is, first of all, because such an arrangement satisfies our own human needs and provides us with an opportunity to express ourselves as human beings. We want to live in a society where we have freedom to be ourselves, freedom to choose our goals in life, and freedom to pursue those goals.

Different ethnic groups have slowly realized that one effective method of preserving their newly won freedoms was through organized, community action.



Dancing at Chicago's Civic Plaza during
Greek Independence Day Celebration. March 25.
The girls wear Greek Amelia costumes.

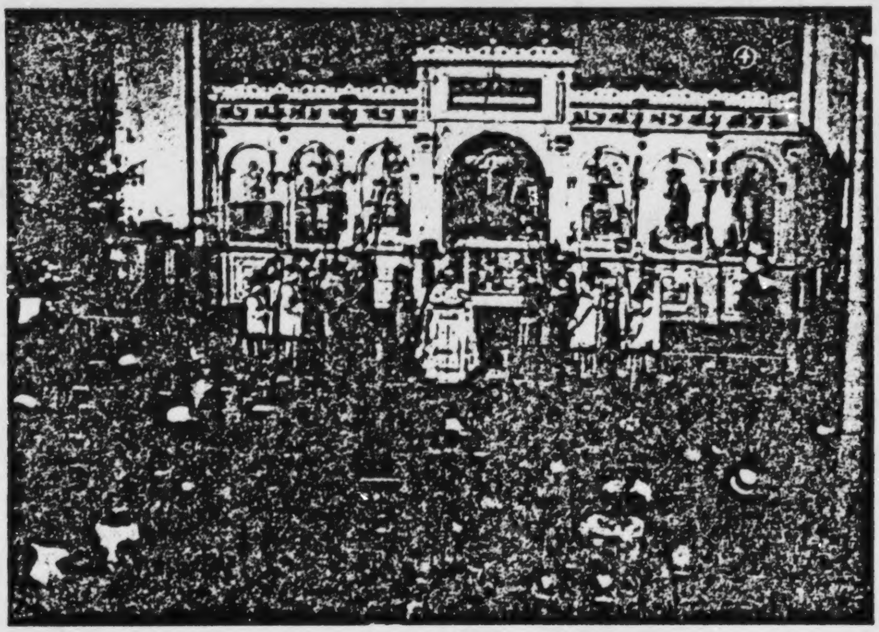
THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH AS A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

For Greeks in the United States the church has played an important role in community organization. The first Greek Orthodox Church in the United States was founded in New Orleans in 1864. During the years of mass emigration in the 1890's, churches were organized in New York, Boston, Chicago, Lowell, and a few other cities. By 1904, Greek Orthodox churches were built from Philadelphia to San Francisco. In 1918 there were 130 Greek Orthodox churches throughout the United States.

The first Greek Orthodox church in Chicago was Holy Trinity. It was established on Chicago's West side, in the vicinity of Halsted and Peoria Streets where the University of Illinois, Chicago Circle campus is now located. This was Chicago's only Greek Orthodox church until the establishment of the church of Saints Constantine and Helen in 1909, and Annunciation Cathedral in 1910. These three churches served the Chicago Greek community until 1920, when other churches were built. Presently in the Chicago area there are 18 Greek Orthodox churches to serve 150,000 Greeks.

The church is an ecological concept to Greeks. If one Greek asks another where he lives, he is most likely to give the name of the church as a point of reference. Greeks in Chicago cluster around about 18 parishes dispersed throughout the area. Each parish represents a Kinotis or church, which serves as a multi-functional center for religious, social, educational, and cultural activities.

One of the important educational activities of Greek Orthodox parishes in the United States has been the organization of schools for the Greek community. The first permanent Greek day school in Chicago was founded in 1908. It was the Socrates School, which was part of the Holy Trinity parish. In 1910 a second day school, Koraes, was built. It was located on Chicago's South side in Sts. Constantine and Helen's parish. Additional day schools were organized: the Solon School which was affiliated with the Annunciation Church; the Plato School of the Assumption Church; St. Gregory School of St. Andrew's Church; and St. Demetrios School. Also a number of Greek schools were established in the suburbs. Besides these, private Greek language schools exist and private tutoring of children is popular.



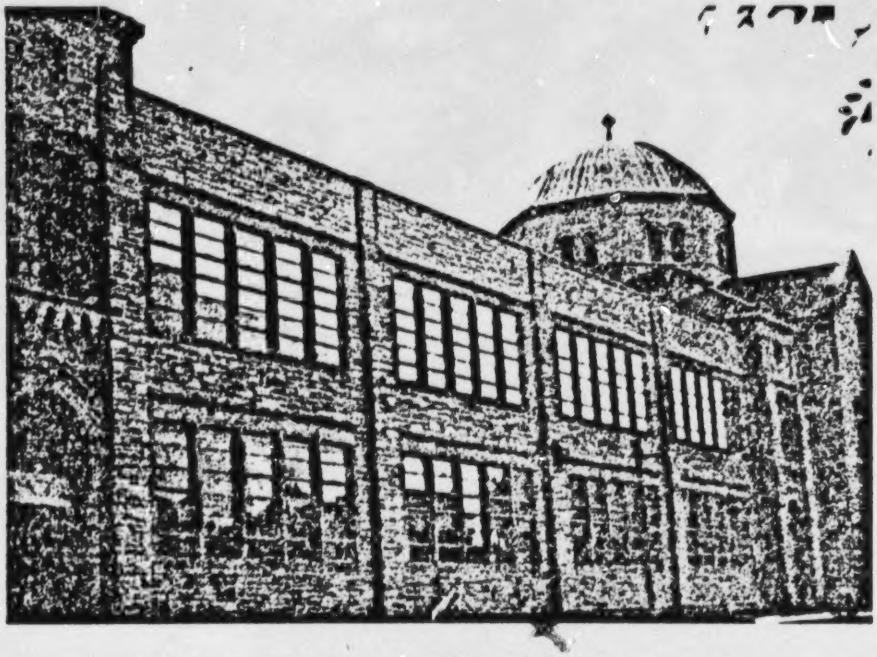
Interior of Greek Orthodox Assumption Church in Chicago

Suggested activities

Ask the children to look in the telephone book for the address of Greek organizations in Chicago. Children, divided into small groups corresponding to the number of organizations they have located, could compose letters asking how these organizations serve the Greek community. What are the key issues in the community at this time? How does each group seek to resolve the conflicts they encounter? What kinds of coalitions have they formed with other ethnic organizations to achieve common goals?

Evaluation

1. Where was the first Greek Orthodox Church in the United States founded?
2. What other activities, besides religion, does the church promote among Greeks?
3. Why do you think Greek schools were founded on church premises?



Greek Orthodox Assumption Church
and Plato school in Chicago

ISSUES IN ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

THE MEANING OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS

Related topics:

Ottoman Empire

Ethnic group: Greeks

Theme: Relationship to homeland

TOPIC: THE GREEK REVOLUTION OF 1821

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. describe the way in which Greece came under the control of the Ottoman Empire;
2. describe the ways in which the Greek people maintained their identity and spirit of independence;
3. identify the nations which helped Greece gain her independence.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

Ask the students what they think about the meaning of the 4th of July celebrations. Are they important or trivial? Is their own birthday celebration important or not? How is a nation's birthday different? Does the celebration of our nation's birth help us to remember a vital event—the beginning of our independence and a new social order in our country? How would we demonstrate our faith and belief in the political principles on which the American social order is based if we did not celebrate annually the 4th of July? Surely, we would know that back in 1776 America declared its independence from British rule, but is it not possible that for some people the meaning of that event would be obscured because they would never find time to pause and think about it? Having a national holiday makes us all pause and remind ourselves that the freedom we have in America today was not always ours.

There are many Americans who, besides pausing to celebrate freedom on July 4th, also pause on other days: these are the days that independence or the Day of Freedom is celebrated in the country of their ancestors. There is a double purpose in celebrating the independence day of one's ancestral homeland. The individual becomes aware of the universal values which unite that American person with the brotherhood of mankind. It provides an opportunity to stop and celebrate the fact that your roots in that distant country have added an extra dimension to your personal life and have filled to a degree the basic human need of belonging.

Bridge questions

1. Discover what are the dates of independence day celebrations in Mexico, Italy, and Greece.
2. Some nations do not celebrate a day of national independence, but have other holidays of great national importance. For example, find out the meaning of Bastille Day in France. What event does it celebrate? How is the celebration carried out? Do French people living outside of France celebrate the day?
3. Other nations have neither an independence day nor a holiday like it which unites the entire nation in celebration. Ireland and England are two examples. Can you think of others? How do you explain the absence of such a holiday? How much of a difference does it make?

THE GREEK REVOLUTION OF 1821

In 1976 the United States has celebrated the Bicentennial of the American Revolution. This is a good time to remember that many other peoples of the world had to fight long and hard for freedom and independence. The Greek War of Independence, fought in the last century, is an example of how much people are willing to sacrifice in order to be free and govern themselves, rather than be governed by foreign powers.

As the Byzantine Empire, once a mighty state, lost its energy and vitality in the fifteenth century, the neighboring Turkish state, known as the Ottoman Empire, grew stronger year by year. In 1453 Constantinople, the city of the Eastern Orthodox patriarchate, fell to the Turks, and by 1456 the Turks occupied all of Greece. For nearly four hundred years the Turkish Ottoman Empire ruled the Greek nation.

For the first two hundred years of their rule, the Turks, a Moslem nation, were fairly tolerant of the Orthodox religion. They permitted the patriarchate to continue in Constantinople, and even gave some Greek churchmen and noblemen important political offices in the administration of the Empire. Also, Greek merchants could practice their business and grow prosperous in relative freedom. But as time went by, the Turkish rule proved cruel, grasping and oppressive. The government began to suppress Greek culture and language, and by 1700 all Greek schools were outlawed. As a result, Greeks taught their children in secret, using caves and other out-of-the-way places as classrooms. The country sank into abject obscurity and poverty.

Such harsh bondage, however, did not break the nation's spirit. The more the Greeks were oppressed, the more they desired independence and autonomy.

One of the forerunners and moving spirits of Greek independence was the poet Rhigas Pheraios. Immediately after the French Revolution he wrote a Greek version of the Marseillaise, the famous French revolutionary song. He established the first modern Greek newspaper in which he published his patriotic poetry. Unfortunately, he died in 1798, and therefore was denied a part in the revolution to which he devoted his life and talent.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Turkish Empire ran into some serious troubles: it had lost a series of wars with Russia, and in 1820 most of its military forces were engaged in suppressing an important Turkish statesman, Ali Pasha, who had formed a powerful army of his own and had rebelled against the government. Greek patriots took this opportunity to start their revolution which they had been preparing for many years. The group directly responsible for the long and careful preparation of the revolution was a clandestine organization called the Society of Friends (Philiki Etairia); it had been started in 1816 by three Greek merchants in the Ukrainian city of Odessa (then a part of the Russian Empire) and later moved its operations to Constantinople.

The Greek revolution broke out in 1821. Its first leaders were Alexander Ypsilanti and his younger brother Demetrios. Both had been officers in the Russian Army and had strong Russian support. The Russian Czar Alexander I, who aided the Greeks from the very beginning of their revolution, did not do so because he respected the independence of nations. After all, his Empire oppressed scores of peoples on its own, notably

Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania and a number of nations in the Caucasus. What the Czar was really interested in was the debilitation of the Ottoman Empire, so that he could gain access to the Black Sea, using the issue of Greek independence only as a feeble pretext.

The first steps of the revolution were bloody and arduous. In 1821 Alexander Ypsilanti revolted in Moldavia, an East European country with a heavy Greek population, and there proclaimed the independence of Greece. But he was disastrously beaten by the Turks, fled to Austria, was imprisoned by the Austrian government, and died in Vienna shortly after his release. When the Turks in Constantinople heard of Ypsilanti's proclamation of Greek independence, they invaded the Greek cathedral during the Easter services, butchered many of the faithful, and hanged the Patriarch from the inner gate of his palace.

But the spirit of the revolution could not be extinguished. It flamed up on the Peloponnesus, as the Greek peninsula is called, and spread to other Greek territories. "Liberty or Death," the rallying cry of the revolutionaries, was heard throughout the land. On island after island and in city after city young leaders organized revolutionary groups and fought the oppressors. The Turkish forces retaliated in shockingly cruel ways. An early revolutionary leader was roasted alive on a spit. On the Island of Chios twenty-five thousand inhabitants were killed, forty-seven thousand sold into slavery, and only three thousand managed to remain alive and free.

The Greek War of Independence became a cause of freedom throughout Europe and in the United States. The nations which came to the aid of Greece did not do so out of self-seeking motives, like the Russian Czar:

the Greek revolution was hailed as a symbol of freedom, an emblem of a new, democratic world.

The famous French general Lafayette, who as a young man had distinguished himself in the American revolution, wrote letters to Thomas Jerrerson, informing him of the Greek cause and asking him to support it. Edward Everett, a Harvard professor of ancient Greek literature and a renowned clergyman and political thinker, traveled throughout the country to talk to Americans about the plight of Greece. Samuel Grindley Howe, a physician and reformer from Boston, spent six years in Greece aiding the revolutionaries. About 450 young Americans went to Greece to join the ranks of the freedom fighters. American missionaries brought forty Greek war orphans to this country. Finally, President Monroe himself made public statements in favor of the Greek revolutionary cause.

Groups of Philhellenes, or Friends of the Greeks, were organized in most European countries. They raised huge sums of money for the cause, and thousands of young men of different nationalities went to Greece to fight in the revolution. The most celebrated volunteer was the English poet Lord Byron who died of natural causes soon after his arrival in Greece, before he had a chance to engage in battle.

And finally several countries sent more substantial military aid in 1827. Greece established a provisional government. The Greek national assembly elected Antonios Capodistrias(Capo d'Istria) as the country's first president. The famous diplomat left his post of foreign minister of the Russian Empire in order to aid his native country. The same year England, Russia and France demanded that the Turks and the Greeks sign an armistice, which would make Greece an equal partner and therefore an independent state.

As was to be expected, Turkey refused. Following that refusal, the allied fleet, comprised of English, French and Russian ships, attacked and defeated the fleet of Turkey's most formidable ally, the Egyptian prince Mohammed Ali. A year later Russia waged war against Turkey and quickly won it. In a treaty, it forced Turkey to recognize Greece's independence. Four years later all the European powers recognized the complete autonomy of Greece.

New troubles beset the country. Greek political parties began fighting among each other for control of the new government. As a result of this turmoil, president Antonios Capodistrias was assassinated by a compatriot in 1831. One of the reasons he was killed was that Russia began demanding too much gratitude in return for its aid; while Russia's demands made it very unpopular among the Greeks, Capodistrias himself, as the ex-foreign minister of the Russian Empire and the Czar's intimate friend, refused to betray the interests of his adopted country. In 1832 the European powers, hoping to restore order to the Greek government, imposed a king on Greece; his name was Otto, and he was a Bavarian prince. The Greeks objected to this intervention into their internal affairs and resented a foreigner ruling over them. In addition, Otto himself was a thoroughly unpleasant man, authoritarian and unfair in his administration. Order was not restored.

But these drawbacks were minor. The main objective had been achieved. Henceforth the Ottoman Empire would not have any influence whatsoever in Southern Europe. And, most important, henceforth the Greeks would be a free and independent people once again.

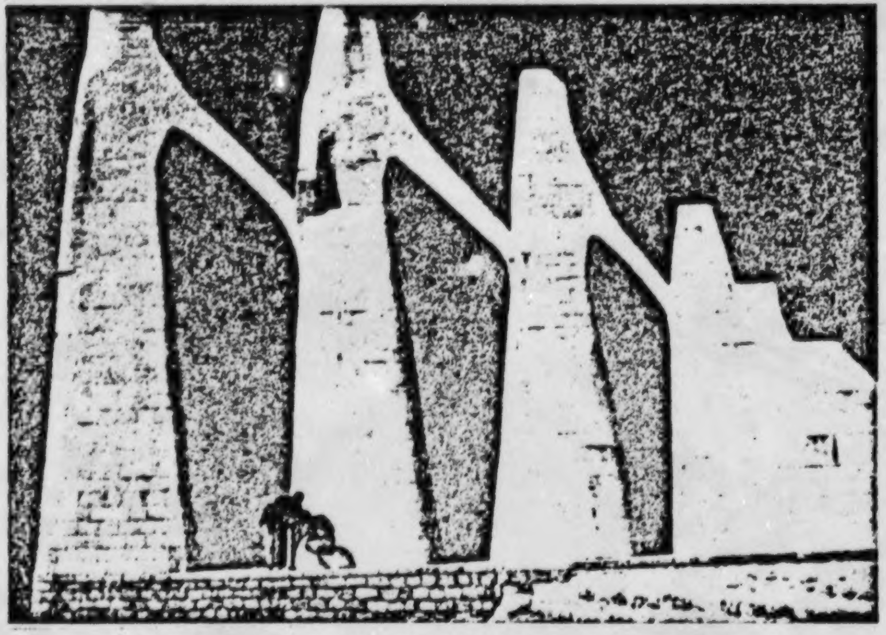
When the Greek people in both Greece and America celebrate their independence day, they are commemorating the Revolution of 1821.

Suggested activities

Have students find a picture of the Greek flag in a reference book. Have them see if they can discover the meaning of its colors and symbols. Make a comparison between the colors and symbols of the Greek and United States flags.

Evaluation

1. How many years did the Turkish Empire control Greece?
2. How did the Greeks manage to keep their own identity during the long period of Turkish occupation?
3. What factors made it possible for Greek patriots to begin the revolution?
4. What other nations helped Greece in her struggle for independence? What were their motives?



Monument to the Dancers of Zalongon

THE CHALLENGE OF AN INTERDEPENDENT WORLD

UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS: GREEK CONCERNS

Related topics:

Partition
United Nations

Ethnic group: Greeks

Theme: Contributions to American Life

TOPIC: CONCERN FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. locate Cyrpus on a map;
2. name the principal neighbors of Cyprus and three groups which have ruled the island for long periods of time;
3. name the two principal ethnic groups on their island and their respective percentage of the population;
4. discuss the advantage and disadvantage of enosis for the Greeks and the Turks on the island;
5. discuss the advantage and disadvantage of partition for both the Greeks and the Turks on the island.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

There is an old proverb, "You cannot keep John on the farm after he has seen Paris." In the same manner you cannot keep people in docile subjugation after they have learned about free societies which provide an individual with equal opportunity regardless of his "race, religion or nationality."

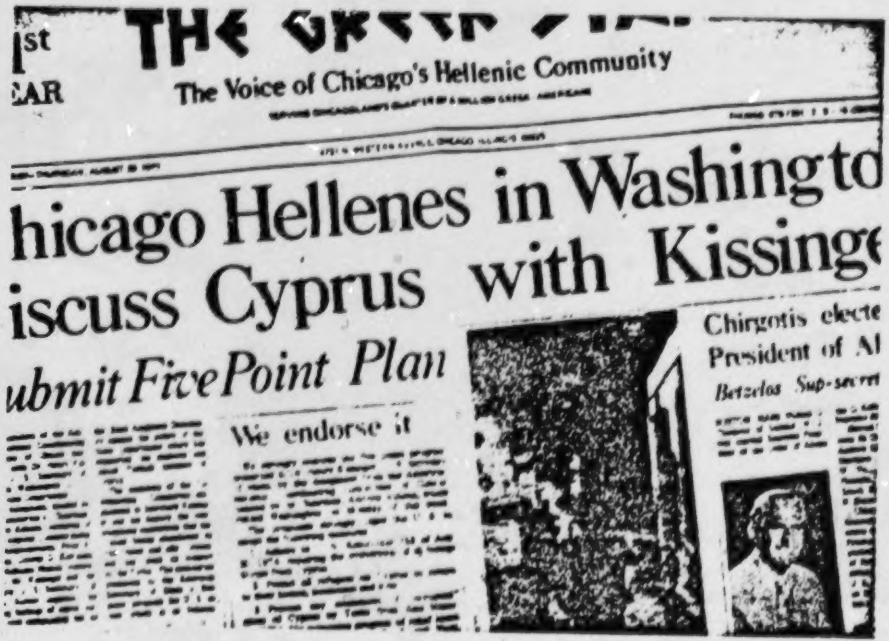
In our day of space explorations, when man has set foot on the moon and pictures flash on our T.V. screens from the distant surface of Mars, it has been very hard to keep secrets from people in hope that remaining unaware of the social progress in other societies their own level of expectations will not rise. Attempts at building fences, which might have worked for medieval China, are no longer successful in the case of present-day Berlin. Man's awareness in the age of electronics cannot be easily fenced in. Today people constantly come into contact with people from other cultures, other ways of living. Therefore, we must learn to accept these cultural differences as a basic and inalienable human right to self-expression. These contacts also bring new awareness of other possibilities of human self-expression and with it new dreams and expectations arise which, when frustrated, can turn into ugly confrontations. Such confrontations on a large scale could be fatal to mankind in an age when technology has broken the barriers of space and sound and made the whole world inter-dependent.

Denial of human rights to people on one hand, can lead to stagnation or rebellion. On the other hand, as is the case of the United States, when people are given freedom to express themselves, fantastic strides are made towards building a good life in a good society. This reality was recognized by the United Nations and resulted in the proclamation of the Declaration of Human Rights.

Ethnic groups in America have always been sensitive to the issue of human or civil rights, the denial of which was often a cause of their being in America. They are concerned first of all with the civil rights issues here in America, where they live and sometimes were discriminated against, and also in their ancestral homelands. By being sensitive to human rights as individuals, communities, or nations, we contribute to the future well-being of all people in a world which more than ever before in history depends on the good will and empathy of all people.

Bridge questions

1. Ask the students how long it took to cross the Atlantic 100 years ago and how long it takes today.
2. Ask the students what their reactions are when they learn that their friends can watch any program on T.V. that they wish to while their own parents forbid them to watch certain programs.



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The Voice of Chicago's Hellenic Community

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CYPRUS

Cyprus is the third largest island in the Mediterranean Sea, located 60 miles west of Lebanon and 40 miles south of Turkey. For over 3,000 years Greeks have been in Cyprus. The name itself is derived from kypros, a Greek word meaning copper.

Cyprus has been a stepping-stone in the path of different conquerors for most of its history. In ancient times the Greeks brought Hellenic culture to the island. Later it became part of the Roman empire and an important center for the early Christian church. St. Paul and St. Barnabas preached Christianity on Cyprus, and St. Helen, the mother of Roman emperor Constantine, built a monastery there. In 333 B.C. Alexander the Great made Cyprus part of his empire. In the middle of the seventh century A.D. it was overtaken by the Arabs. During the Crusades, Richard the Lionhearted occupied it in 1191 and then sold it to a French nobleman because he needed the cash. The Venetians controlled Cyprus from 1489-1571. For the next two centuries Cyprus remained a province within the Ottoman Empire. In 1878 England then took over the island as one of its side-effects of a war between Russia and Turkey.

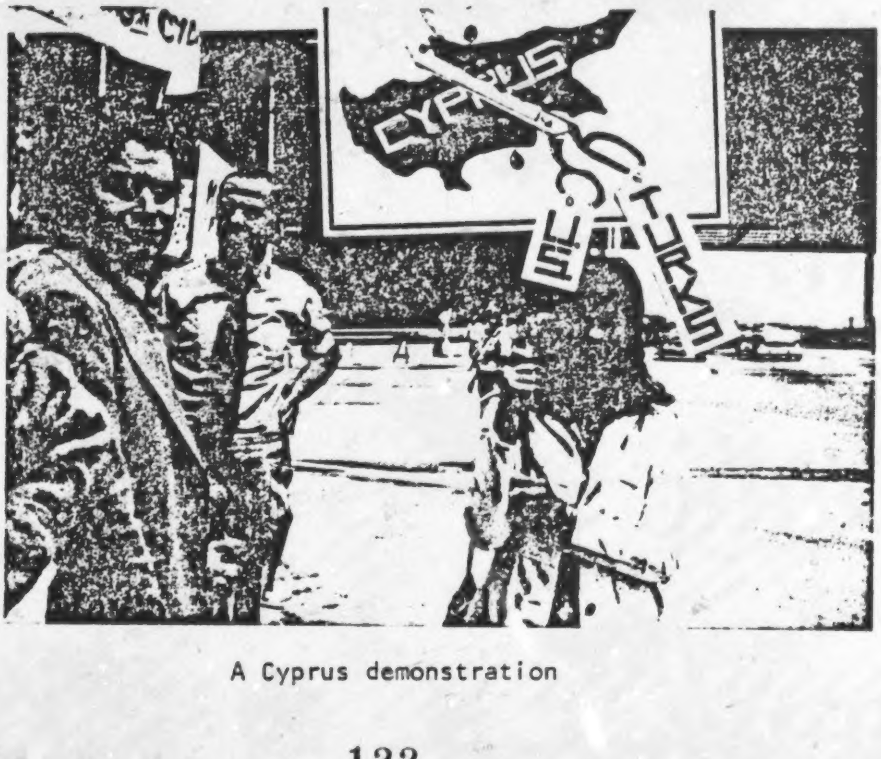
Since the coming of the British to Cyprus, the Greeks on the island have been agitating for enosis, political union with Greece. After World War II the Greeks again demanded enosis, while the Turkish population, which was a minority on the island, asked for partition. When England refused to give in to Greek demands, guerilla warfare broke out. Finally, the British were forced to withdraw and an independent Cypriot Republic was established in 1959. A new constitution was drawn up, and England, Greece and Turkey all promised to support the new constitution.

Within this new republic, the Greeks formed by far the largest single ethnic group. They were about 80% of the population, with the Turks numbering only about 20%. Most of the land was controlled by the Greek population. In spite of the guarantees by the three countries, guerilla warfare and terrorism frequently broke out. United Nations soldiers were called in to keep the peace. Their troops formed a boundary line between the warring factions in the city of Nicosia, while Famagusta became a Turkish town where Greeks were not allowed.

In July, 1974, two revolts and one invasion threw the people of the island into new turmoil. In mid-July anti-Turkish Greek forces on Cyprus overthrew the moderate government led by Archbishop Makarios. The leaders in Athens verbally promised that they would respect the island's independence and the rights of the Turkish minority. The Turkish population on the island was frightened and sought help from Turkey. Nine days later the combined strength of the Turkish army, navy and air force was evident. Turkish soldiers landed and moved rapidly to occupy a large portion of the island. Four days after the arrival of Turkish troops on Cyprus the Greek government in Athens was overthrown. A new government was set up and declared its opposition to the Turkish invasion of the island. They sought help from the United Nations.

Within a month the Turkish army occupied about 40% of the island. There was bitter fighting and many atrocities as innocent civilians were slaughtered. Two hundred thousand Greek Cypriots abandoned their homes and fled to Greek-controlled areas. The United Nations Security Council called for the withdrawal of all troops from the island, the beginning of discussions between the warring parties, and the safe return of refugees to their homes. It was idle talk. The Turkish army remained in control of the territory it had seized, refused to allow refugees to return to their homes, and made plans to bring in more Turkish settlers from the mainland. Its aim was the effective partition of Cyprus into two distinct zones, one for Greeks, and one for Turks.

American Greeks have tried to aid their friends and relatives on the island. The Greek Orthodox Church in North and South America established a foster parent plan to care for the 10,000 children who have been orphaned. Money and food have been sent to displaced persons. Pressure has been put upon Congress to stop selling arms to Turkey. But since the United States needs both Greece and Turkey as allies in the eastern Mediterranean, the government has tried not to alienate either the Greek or the Turkish government.



A Cyprus demonstration

Suggested activities

1. Show the students a map of Cyprus and explain its location, its geographic features, climate and the economy of the country.
2. Ask the students to find one or more persons who have visited their ancestral homeland. Conduct a brief interview:
   - If it was not your ancestral homeland, would you have made the same effort to visit that country? Why?
   - How were your experiences during the visit different from your expectations? What were some disappointments? What were some pleasant surprises?
   - When you came back from your visit, did you feel a greater sense of identity with Americans of your own ethnic background? Why? Why not?
   - Would you like to return? If you could return for a year, would you? Why or why not?
   - Compare and contrast the view of America held by the people in the homeland with your view. Account for the differences.
3. Ask the students to make a mock preparation to visit their ancestral homeland. They should call a travel agency to find out how much a trip would cost, if they would need a passport, a visa, and any special innoculations. They should find out what climate and geographical features the country has and accordingly plan a one-suitcase wardrobe to take along. They should make a two week itinerary.

   For example:

   1st day - Depart from O'Hare, Chicago at 6:30 P.M. Arrive at Fiumico Airport, Rome, Italy, at 9:00 A.M. Go through customs. Arrive at the hotel. Unpack, wash, take a nap. Then go for lunch and take an afternoon bus tour of the city.

2nd, 3rd, and 4th day - Sightseeing in Rome. (Students should describe the sights they want to see.)

5th, 6th, and 7th day - Visit Naples. Sightseeing. Visiting relatives.

8th day - Return to Rome. Go to opera in evening.

9th and 10th day - Go to Florence. Sightseeing.

11th and 12 day - Go to Venice. Ride a gondola. Visit St. Mark's Place and feed the pigeons.

13th day - Return to Rome.

14th day - Fly back to Chicago.

Students should consult their parents and relatives on what sights to visit, whether there are any relatives in that country to visit, what recreational activities are popular there (sightseeing must not be the only activity during the visit), what food is typical there, and any other such information. The itinerary should be as realistically planned as possible. Distances between cities and time for traveling should be stated. A preferred season for traveling should be stated. The main goal should be a visit to the town or village from which one's ancestors came.

4. Ask the students to cut out stories from the local and national newspapers dealing with Cyprus. Since the Cyprus situation involves a long-standing conflict with neighboring states, a long-term project should be envisioned. Because the facts and the meaning of the facts are often in considerable dispute, care should be taken so that the various points of view are given a fair representation. How do these stories relate to the issue of Cyprus' independence? What other issues are involved? How have Greek Americans reacted to the varied threats upon Cyprus?

5. Compare and contrast the position of Greek Americans with other ethnic groups in this nation whose homeland is under attack: how did American Jews react when Egyptian troops moved into the Israeli-controlled Sinai peninsula? How have Lithuanians reacted to Soviet persecution of Lithuanian nationalism in the U.S.S.R.? How has the American Irish community responded to the presence of 15,000 English troops in Northern Ireland? Should Black Americans get involved in the liberation movements in Angola, Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa? Is there any general policy or rule which these American ethnic groups can adopt to aid their relatives in the homeland? Should they put pressure upon Congress to give military or economic aid? Should they adopt a "hands-off" attitude and disregard or neglect the problems on the other side of the ocean?

Evaluation

1. What should be the policy of the United States government in this controversy? (Since no one has come up with a suggestion or a plan which satisfies all parties concerned—Greeks and Turks on Cyprus, in Greece and Turkey and in the United States—do not be disheartened by trying to wrestle with this question.)
2. Partition of a territory into two separate states has frequently been tried in recent years: Northern Ireland and Eire, East Germany and West Germany, China and Taiwan, North Korea and South Korea, North Vietnam and South Vietnam, India and Pakistan, Nigeria, Lebanon, South Africa. What are the causes which seem to make partition necessary? Do you think such partition is desirable? Why, or why not? What are the probably long-term consequences?

3. How is the partitioning of a country into two or more parts similar or different than the partitioning of a city into different territories controlled by different gangs? Are the causes the same? The results?
4. If you were a Greek or a Turk living on Cyprus, would you remain or leave? Why? If you would migrate, where would you go?

THE RIGHT TO SELF-EXPRESSION

RETENTION OF ETHNIC IDENTITY AMONG AMERICAN GREEKS

Related topics:

Greek Orthodoxy
Byzantine period
Hagia Sophia
Patriarchate

Ethnic group: Greeks

Theme: Relationship to homeland

TOPIC: THE TIES THAT BIND

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. describe the growth of the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire and its religious separation from the Western Catholic Church.
2. explain what the words "Catholic" and "Orthodox" mean used in this context;
3. describe in what ways the Byzantine church became culturally identified with Greeks;
4. describe the role of the patriarch in the Greek Orthodox Church.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

Two of the most important factors in binding an ethnic group together and providing it with a sense of identity are religion and language. For most ethnic groups religion and language are closely interwoven and cannot be easily separated. In some cases ethnic identity was expressed by other means. All Roman Catholics, for example, used the Latin language in religious observances. But different ethnic groups sometimes practiced different rites, rituals and customs even though the language of worship was identical. Eventually these differences in the outward form or expression or belief were more important to a particular ethnic group than the common language they shared with others during worship.

We often think of language in utilitarian terms: language as a means of communication between human beings. But there is more to language than sound. In certain respects language is like religion. It is a mirror which reflects our innermost perceptions and understandings. Would there be humanity without language?

Mankind, with all its fantastic achievements in science and technology, has made little progress in answering such fundamental questions as: what is the meaning of life? Perhaps there is no rational explanation to that question. Life is a gift and people have expressed their appreciation for that gift in celebration. Another word for that "act of celebration" is "religion." Religion and language, human expressions of the celebration and consciousness of life, rank at the top of human values.

The Founding Fathers of this country were aware of the basic values of religion and language to a meaningful, human life. That is why the First Amendment to the Constitution was introduced: not to suppress religious expression but to protect individuals and their right to worship as they pleased. Neither does the U.S. Constitution single out one language as mandatory for the whole nation. (The use of the English language is based on custom, not on federal laws.) The Constitution serves as a kind of written guarantee, assuring certain freedoms which are vital to a meaningful, human life.

THE TIES THAT BIND

Whether or not we choose to attend church on Sunday, we must admit that the Christian religion has helped shape the culture of our Western world. Besides, Christian traditions, be they Orthodox, Catholic or Protestant, do not change much from one century to the next. No wonder, then, that those ethnic groups in the United States that come from Christian backgrounds practice the various religious rites and rituals of their respective homelands with particular zeal and care: they continue the traditions established by their distant ancestors and maintain strong spiritual links with the mother country. Greek communities in the United States enjoy a particularly rich and colorful religious life, reflecting the long and eventful history of the Greek Orthodox Church.

Why do the Greeks call themselves Orthodox? The early Christian church was a single body. In its early stages, however, its center alternated between Rome and Constantinople, corresponding to the shift of center of the late Roman Empire itself. The differences between the Eastern and the Western branches of the church were evident from the very beginning. In the West the early church was autonomous because the Roman emperors of the first centuries of our era were too weak to control it. In the East, by which we mean early medieval Greece and parts of Asia Minor, the Church immediately became a part of the state, known as the Byzantine Empire. At first the Byzantine Empire continued the traditions of the Roman Empire. But as Rome became weaker and weaker, the Byzantine emperors severed all connections with it and made their kingdom totally autonomous. While in the so-called Dark Ages the Western church was confused and disorganized, the Eastern church flourished because it remained under absolute control of the Byzantine Emperor. Add to this the fact that while the Western church used Latin, the Eastern church used Greek, and you will understand why, by 900 A.D., the difference between the two branches of the Christian Church in rites, customs and even important points of dogma became irreconcilable. It was, therefore, to be expected that in the eleventh century these two branches became totally autonomous, the Eastern branch proclaiming its complete independence from the Pope of Rome. In the early Middle Ages the adjectives catholic, meaning "universal," and orthodox, meaning "of the correct faith," were used indiscriminately to describe the Christian Church. Now, after the split, Catholic came to mean the Western Church of Rome, and Orthodox was adopted by the Eastern Church in the Byzantine Empire. Hence the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church.

The Greek Church is not the only Orthodox Church in the world. As time went on, several nations, which had been part of the Eastern Orthodox Church, broke away and established their own independent churches. And so today we have the following national Orthodox churches: Russian, Bulgarian, Rumanian, Albanian, Ukrainian, Georgian, Cyprian, Serbian, Montenegrin, and some others. There are Orthodox parishes in Finland and Poland. The rather important Japanese Orthodox Church is highly respected in its predominantly Buddhist mother country. There is no doubt, however, that the strongest and best organized among them is still the Greek Orthodox Church.

For a long time the seat, or patriarchate, of the Greek Orthodox Church was the majestic cathedral of St. Sophia, or Hagia Sophia which means Holy Wisdom, located in the ancient city of Constantinople. It stands on the site of a smaller church, built in the fourth century A.D. at the order of Emperor Constantine II. In the fifth century the original structure burned down, was rebuilt by Theodosius II only to be destroyed by fire again, a century later. The edifice which, with some modifications, has remained until our time, was erected in 532-37 on the request of Emperor Justinian.

When the Turks occupied Greece in the fifteenth century, the cathedral became a Moslem mosque. Today the church serves as a museum of Byzantine art, while the patriarchate is housed in the Church of St. George at the Phanar in the same city. In 1936, however, the Turks changed the city's name: it is now called Istanbul.

The name of the present head, or patriarch, of the Greek Orthodox Church is Demetrios. It is Patriarch Demetrios who oversees the work of Archbishops and Bishops, also called Metropolitants. Archbishops are responsible for thousands of churches. All the Greek parishes in North and South America, for example, have only one archbishop, whose name is Iakovos. Bishops or metropolitans are responsible for about sixty to seventy parishes each. Timotheos is the metropolitan of Chicago. The same structure, of course, prevails in Greece itself. Incidentally, Greek priests are allowed to marry; monks and bishops are not.

How closely the American Greeks are tied with the Greek Orthodox Church can be witnessed by the fact that the predecessor of the present day Patriarch Demetrios, the Patriarch Atenagoras, was an American-born Greek.

Suggested activities

Ask if any children in the classroom know other languages, besides English. Also ask students to identify their religious affiliation. Now, discuss with them the meaning of the diversity of answers. Were they denied education at public expense because of their religious beliefs? Are they forbidden to converse in public places in languages other than English? Suppose that they were forbidden to go to school because of their religion or were arrested because they talked in a foreign language in the street? Let the students speculate on how many people in America would be deprived of education and serve sentences in jail under such conditions. To demonstrate the point, ask those students who have identified themselves as belonging to a religious denomination and those who can speak another language to leave their desks and stand by the wall. Ask if the children who have reamined seated if they would really want all their standing classmates to leave the school.

Evaluation

1. What is the dominant religion among Greeks?
2. What was the official language of the Byzantine Empire?
3. How did the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church emerge?
4. In what city does the Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church reside?

Related topics:

Church services
Religious art
Church architecture
Ikonostas

Ethnic group: Greeks

Theme: Relationship to homeland

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. relate some religious services performed in the Greek Orthodox Church;
2. describe the main features of Byzantine church architecture;
3. define ikonostas.

GREEK RELIGIOUS TIES

Make an effort to visit a Greek Orthodox church. Chances are there are several in your city. Its beautiful architecture and decorations, together with the color and solemnity of the service, will make your visit a unique and unforgettable experience.

The Greek Orthodox services are held in the Greek language. In the United States and other English-speaking countries Greek priests sometimes read sermons in English. In Greece itself there are no seats in the church: men and women are segregated, the men standing at the right side of the church, and the women at the left. The Greek churches in the United States, however, have benches, on which men and women are allowed to sit side by side.

Besides Sunday masses and holiday services, the high points (called Sacraments) of the Orthodox or Byzantine rite are baptism, confirmation, confession, communion, marriage, annointment and burial. As for holidays, Easter is by far the most important holiday of the year and gets much more attention than Christmas. An interesting feature of the Easter service is the epitafio or bier for the dead Christ. It is a table-like structure placed in the middle of the church and richly decorated with candles and flowers; its top is covered with a heavy canvas, on which the dead body of Christ is embroidered or painted. It is called the epitafio of Christ's shroud. On the day of Good Friday the Shroud is ceremonially carried around the town in a splendid religious procession. At Midnight Mass the Shroud is lifted off the bier to symbolize Christ's Resurrection. The midnight Easter mass is held during most of the night between Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday. It is held outside the church, since at that time the church structure symbolizes Christ's tomb. When the priest hears the first Easter bells, he ceremonially opens the church and the congregation enters it. This ritual symbolizes the resurrection of Christ.

Another old Easter custom is the distribution of eggs, dyed red, on Easter morning. In pagan times such red eggs symbolized the birth of the sun, and for Christians they mean the resurrection of Christ. The color red may also symbolize the blood that Christ shed on the cross. During the midnight Easter mass parishioners light candles and hold them in their hands. The flame of the candle symbolizes Christian faith. After mass each family tries to keep its candles burning all the way home.

The rich symbolism of the Orthodox faith is not restricted to the ritualistic gestures, words and paintings. It is also embodied in the Byzantine style of architecture in which the church is built. The church is usually square, containing a large unified space, with as few divisions or supports as the laws of physics allow. This open space symbolizes the union of all who stand inside the church. The central dome is low, large and rounded, as opposed to the tall pointed tower so often seen on Western churches in the Gothic style. The dome is symbolic of Heaven. The nave, the main area of the church were the worshippers stand, symbolizes the earth. In ancient Greek churches the pulpit, called *amvon* (from the Greek word "to ascend"), was an elevated platform right in the area of the nave. It symbolized the stone rolled away from Christ's tomb. Its location in the nave put the preacher, reading the sermon, as close to the people as possible. Now the pulpit is usually left out altogether. The word sanctuary means the most sacred part of a sacred place. Both in Orthodox and Catholic church, the sanctuary is the area designated for the altar which, in its turn, contains the Holy Sacrament. Both the sanctuary and the *solea* are slightly higher than the nave. The *solea* is a strip in front of the sanctuary, and on it the bishop's throne is placed. In ordinary parish churches the throne is brought out only for visiting bishops, while it is a permanent feature of a cathedral, since the cathedral is the principal church of a diocese or, in short, a bishop's church. In Greek the bishop's throne is called *cathedra*; a cathedral, therefore, is a church which houses a bishop's throne. The throne itself, much like that of a king or emperor, symbolizes the worldly power and authority of the church. A unique feature of the Orthodox Church is the *ikonostas*, which literally means "icon stand." It is a partition of finely wrought trelliswork, separating the sanctuary from the nave. The *ikonostas* has three gates: the main gate in the center opens onto the altar where the Holy Sacrament is perfomed, while the two side gates are for assisting priests or altar boys. The *ikonostas* is richly decorated with icons, "representations" or paintings depicting sacred persons and events. The icons of Christ and St. John the Baptist are always placed to the right of the center gate, while the icons of the Virgin Mary and the patron saint of the given church are placed to the left. Many other icons extend to the right and the left of the four central ones. In addition, another, and sometimes a third, row or tier of icons is placed above the gates. The icons depict apostles, Fathers of the Eastern Orthodox Church, and miraculous events from the New Testament. While the number of the icons may vary depending on the size and wealth of the given church, the order in which they are put upon the *ikonostas* is strictly traditional and may not change from one church to another. The *ikonostas* is meant to conceal the Holy Sacrament. It symbolizes the curtain in Solomon's temple which separated the sanctuary from the rest of the floor space. That is why the gates are opened only during services; at other times they remain closed.

It is interesting to visit a Greek Orthodox church. There are many such churches in New York, Chicago, and other major American cities where Greeks live. When we look at the beautiful icons and listen to the solemn songs of the priest and the deacons, we begin to realize how rich and diversified America really is.

Related topics:	**Ethnic group:** Greeks
The role of the ethnic press	**Theme:** Relationship to homeland

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. name at least two Greek American periodicals;
2. explain why the ethnic press is important to ethnic communities in America.

GREEK NEWSPAPERS

Thousands of ethnic newspapers come out everyday in the United States. Recently an association of the ethnic press was established in New York, in order to coordinate the work of the multi-lingual newspapers, and exchange ideas and opinions.

What are the functions of ethnic newspapers in this country? The first and most important function is to give members of a given ethnic group an opportunity to keep in touch with each other. Between San Francisco and New York, Miami and Minneapolis ethnic communities tell each other of their events, needs, successes. A Jewish American writer has written a new novel. A Ukrainian American scholar has been appointed to an American university. A Lithuanian American scientist was awarded a prize. All such news goes into an ethnic newspaper.

Another function of the ethnic press is to inform immigrants about American internal and foreign policy, especially as it affects the given ethnic group, and interpret the obvious and sometimes the hidden meanings of a federal, state or municipal decision. Still another task is to keep an ethnic group in touch with its homeland, reporting its political, economic or cultural news. Conversely, people of the mother country can find out about how their compatriots in the United States live, since in most cases (unless they are prohibited by local governments), such newspapers are shipped in large quantities to the given European or Asian country.

And finally, the English-language sections that most ethnic newspapers publish enables other Americans to learn about the life of an interesting group of people in their own city or town. Have you ever seen an ethnic newspaper? It is easy to obtain one at a larger newsstand or in the main branch of your public library.

The Greek language press in the United States was a valuable source of information for early immigrants, since they spoke very little English and felt lost in this vast and busy country. The first newspapers were published only in Greek. They carried accounts of men and events in Greece, and of Greek communities in the United States. Thus they helped Greek immigrants maintain contact with each other and with their mother country.

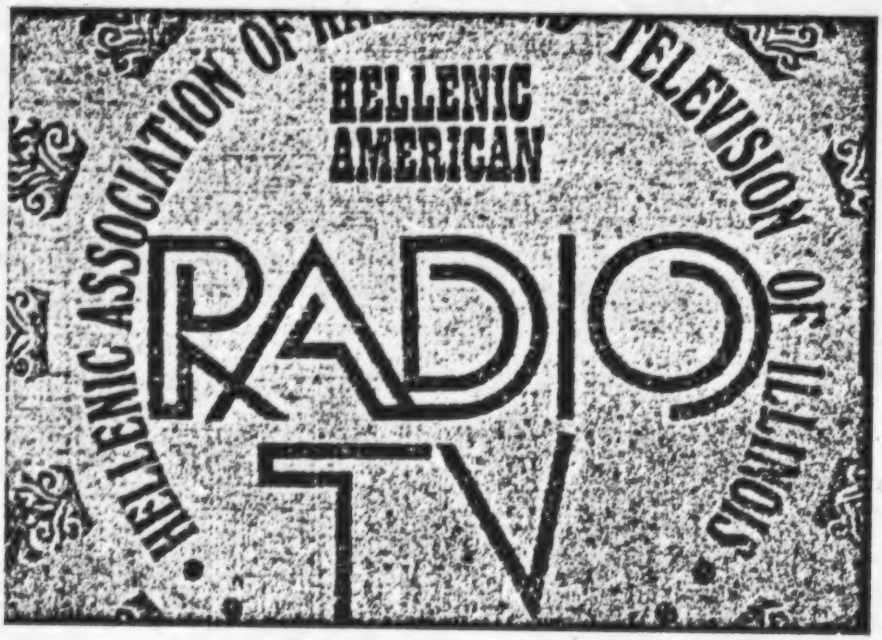
With the exception of the Atlantis, which was first published in 1894, and a few weeklies in Chicago and San Francisco, Greek newspapers appeared and disappeared very quickly. The main reason for such a rapid mortality rate was the lack of a stable financial basis.

During the First World War the Greek press was divided into those newspapers which supported the Greek King and those which favored the establishment of the Greek republic. They also quarreled about whether Greece should remain neutral or enter the war. This division both reflected and stimulated the political strife within the Greek American community. The Greek Orthodox Church also became embroiled in political battles over the monarchy and the question of neutrality. Such quarrels cut into business associations, church membership, family relations, and social functions. Some communities have never fully recovered from them.

After World War I, many Greek newspapers made an effort to retain, and if possible, increase the number of readers, by adding an English language section. This meant that a new generation of Greek Americans had come on the scene—young people already born in this country, interested in community affairs but preferring the English language. The American Hellenic World, which was published in Chicago during the 1920's, was one of the first papers of consequence to add a section in English. At first the Atlantis and National Herald were opposed to such a policy, since they were concerned with preserving the immigrants' Greek identity. But by 1940, most newspapers were published in both Greek and English.

Today's leading Greek American newspapers in Chicago are the Greek Star and Greek Press. Both papers are published in Greek and English. Their columns are written by well-known intellectuals, professionals and authors. The news concerns American Greeks and the American Greek community. Special columns are devoted to ancient Greek mythology, the Greek Orthodox faith, psychological counseling, business and most of all (in the early 1970's) the problems of Cyprus and the attitude of the American government toward the Cyprian turmoil. Human interest stories are particularly popular and so are news items from the world of international sports. The newspapers are national and international in scope, although they do concentrate on local community events. The Hellenic Chronicle of Boston centers on Greeks in American politics.

Pilgrimage Magazine, a monthly journal published in Illinois, focuses on the history of Greek immigrants in all countries of the world. It is concerned both with the past and the future of the Greek immigration in America. Its articles are written both in Greek and English. The Greek Press and Information Service at the Greek Embassy publishes an English monthly newsletter, pertaining to political, economic, and artistic events both in Greek American communities and in Greece itself.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